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5 SELECT COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE THE
6 JANUARY 6TH ATTACK ON THE U.S. CAPITOL,
7 U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
8 WASHINGTON, D.C.

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12 INTERVIEW OF: RAY EPPS

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16 Friday, January 21, 2022

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18 Washington, D.C.

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21 The interview in the above matter was held via Webex, commencing at 1:04 p.m.

22 Present: Representatives Schiff, Murphy, Aguilar, and Kinzinger.

1

2 Appearances:

3

4 For the SELECT COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE

5 THE JANUARY 6TH ATTACK ON THE U.S. CAPITOL:

6

7 [REDACTED] CHIEF CLERK

8 [REDACTED], RESEARCHER

9 [REDACTED] INVESTIGATIVE COUNSEL

10 [REDACTED] INVESTIGATIVE COUNSEL

11 [REDACTED], STAFF ASSISTANT

12 [REDACTED], STAFF ASSISTANT

13 [REDACTED] SENIOR TECHNICAL ADVISOR

14 [REDACTED] DETAILEE, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

15 [REDACTED] SENIOR INVESTIGATIVE COUNSEL

16 [REDACTED] INVESTIGATIVE COUNSEL

17 [REDACTED] INVESTIGATIVE COUNSEL

18 [REDACTED] CHIEF INVESTIGATIVE COUNSEL

19 [REDACTED], SENIOR INVESTIGATIVE COUNSEL

20

21 For RAY EPPS:

22

23 JOHN W. BLISCHAK

24 ANDREW BLISCHAK

1

2 [REDACTED] We'll go on the record at 1:04 p.m.

3

4 Good afternoon, Mr. Epps. This is a transcribed interview of Mr. James Ray Epps
5 conducted by the House Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the
6 United States Capitol pursuant to House Resolution 503.

6

7 At this time, I'd ask the witness to please state your full name and spell your last
8 name for the record.

8

9 Mr. Epps. James Ray Epps, E-P-P-S, Senior.

9

10 [REDACTED] Thank you. This will be a staff-led interview, and members, of
11 course, may choose to also ask questions throughout this interview. In the room today,
12 we have [REDACTED], investigative counsel. We have [REDACTED] detailee from the
13 Department of Homeland Security, Mr. [REDACTED] senior advisor to the January
14 6th committee, Mr. [REDACTED] senior investigative counsel, [REDACTED]
15 investigative counsel, Mr. [REDACTED] investigative counsel, Mr. [REDACTED]
16 investigative counsel. We also have members present. We have Ms. Stephanie
17 Murphy and Mr. Adam Kinzinger present.

17

18 Did I miss any other staff or members who may be present for the call?

18

19 Mr. Epps, you are voluntarily here for this transcribed interview. At this time,
20 could your counsel please state their name for the record?

20

21 Mr. Blischak. Yes. My name is John W. Blischak. I will be representing Mr.
22 Epps throughout the course of this investigation.

22

23 [REDACTED] So there is an official reporter transcribing the record of this
24 interview. Please wait until each question is completed before you begin your response,
25 and we will try to wait until your response is complete before we ask our next question.
The stenographer cannot record non-verbal responses such as shaking your head, so it's

1 important that you answer each question with an audible, verbal response. We ask that
2 you provide complete answers based on your best recollection, and if the question is not
3 clear, please just ask one of us for a clarification. If you do not know the answer, please
4 simply say that.

5 I want to remind you that it is unlawful to deliberately provide false information to
6 Congress. For this interview, providing false information could result in criminal
7 penalties for perjury and/or false statements. Do you understand that, Mr. Epps?

8 Mr. Epps. Yes.

9 [REDACTED] Also, at this time, just joining the call is [REDACTED], the chief
10 investigative counsel.

11 [REDACTED] Thank you, [REDACTED]

12 Good afternoon, Mr. Epps.

13 [REDACTED] So, logistically, please let us know if you need any breaks
14 throughout this interview, or if you would like to discuss anything with Mr. Blischak, we'll
15 go off the record. We'll all mute and then go off camera so you can talk to Mr. Blischak,
16 and then we'll come back on when you all are ready to answer questions. Does that
17 make sense?

18 Mr. Epps. Yes, sir.

19 [REDACTED] There also may be several people asking you questions today, so
20 again, if you don't understand a question, please just ask me to repeat it.

21 EXAMINATION

22

23 Q So, Mr. Blischak, starting off, please tell us a little bit about your background,
24 like where you're from, and your education background.

25 Mr. Blischak. I didn't know I was going to do this.

1 [REDACTED] I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Mr. Epps, not Mr. Blischak. I apologize.

2 [REDACTED] Mr. Epps, tell us about your background.

3 Sorry. Not you, Mr. Blischak.

4 Mr. Epps. My background. Born and raised in Mesa, Arizona. High school. I

5 did do some college, things that I needed, business, personal finance, that kind of stuff.

6 [REDACTED]

7 Q And tell us a little bit about your career. Tell us what your first career was
8 and walk us through kind of your career progression.

9 A So after I got out of the Marine Corps, I went into roofing, and was a
10 journeyman roofer for a few years, became a foreman. After that, I opened up my own
11 business probably in about '80 -- maybe about '86. Yeah, '86. And off and on, we
12 followed the work. I ended up in Vegas where I met my wife, and we were married
13 there and then moved back to Arizona.

14 Q I might have missed this. How long were you in the Marine Corps?

15 A 4 years.

16 Q 4 years. And what was your job in the Marines?

17 A Infantry.

18 Q Were you ever-- did you ever -- in the Marines or in the job that you just
19 discussed, were you ever -- did you ever work in law enforcement?

20 A No, sir.

21 Q Did you ever work for the FBI?

22 A No, sir.

23 Q Mr. Epps, this is not the first time we're interviewing you. Is that correct?

24 A No, sir.

25 Q We also met with you back in November. Is that right?

1 A Yes, sir.

2 Q So, today, we're going to go through a lot of the same topics that we went
3 through in November, okay, so just to kind of give you the highlight where we're heading
4 for today.

5 The first thing I want to talk about is I believe that you were a member of the Oath
6 Keepers at one point --

7 A I was.

8 Q -- is that correct?

9 A I was.

10 Q Can you please tell us how you came about joining the Oath Keepers, how
11 long you were in the Oath Keepers, and just your experiences in the Oath Keepers?

12 A There was a -- oh, geez. I think it was called the 912 March, and I think the
13 Tea Party took credit for it or tried to take credit for it. We -- I took my dad to
14 Washington, the first I'd ever been to Washington, and we met the Oath Keepers there.
15 We attended a dinner, and I thought they were pretty -- pretty stand-up guys. They
16 were law enforcement, prior law enforcement, prior military and other people that -- that
17 wanted to know more about the oath, and so I joined up with them.

18 Q What year was this that you joined the Oath Keepers?

19 A You know, I -- I'm thinking it was 2009, 2010, somewhere around there.

20 Q And how long did you stay in the organization?

21 A Probably a couple years.

22 Q And did you have any roles while you were a member of the Oath Keepers?

23 A I oversaw Arizona as a chapter president.

24 Q And why did you eventually leave the Oath Keepers?

25 A There was a -- a push to -- not a push. Stewart wanted to -- there was

1 some things going on in Washington and Portland. I think it was Portland. It was
2 Portland. I think that's when antifa had first come out, and we were seeing a lot of
3 things. They were burning things and doing different things on the news, and he
4 thought that it would be wise if we were to go there and try to direct them, get in with
5 them and direct them to do things other -- other ways. I didn't agree with that, so we
6 kind of split ways.

7 Q Got it.

8 A They were too radical -- too radical for my -- my likes, so --

9 Q Thank you. So now, I want to fast forward from the couple of years that
10 you were in the Oath Keepers to the 2020 general election. Did you support former
11 President Trump in that election?

12 A I did.

13 Q And during this period around and after the election, did you have concerns
14 about how the election went with the voting and all in 2020?

15 A I did.

16 Q Please tell us about the concerns you had surrounding the 2020 election?

17 A Well, you know, there was a lot of hype about it. You listen to some of that
18 hype, but I try not to judge on it. But we had something happen on our property, our
19 farm. And we have two addresses on our farm. It's kind of unique. And one of the
20 addresses that we do not live at received five ballots -- well, no -- received three ballots,
21 and we received two ballots at our location, at our -- our address.

22 Those three ballots, we had never -- we've owned the property for now 12 years.
23 We never heard of the people that -- that were on the ballots. My wife actually told the
24 mail carrier to keep one of them and send it back. The other two she got, and she tore
25 them up, and she threw them in the trash. She told me about it, and I told her, you

1 can't throw those away. You need to keep those. So she took one of them out of the
2 trash, one of them had food on it, and kept it. And that was our concerns. I -- I don't
3 know if the election was stolen. I -- I don't know that, but I know that there are some
4 concerns, and, you know, there shouldn't be concerns with our election.

5 Q Thank you. Just to go back a second, and I need to go -- I'm going back to
6 the Oath Keeper answer. You mentioned Stewart. Does that refer to Mr. Stewart
7 Rhodes? Is that who you were referring to?

8 A Yes, sir.

9 Q Okay. And was he the head of the Oath Keepers at the time when you
10 were communicating with hem?

11 A Yes. He's their president.

12 Q Gotcha. Thank you.

13 [REDACTED] And just for the record, Mr. Aguilar has joined the call.

14 BY [REDACTED]

15 Q Okay. So going back, you just said that you did have some concerns about
16 the 2020 election. Did that kind of shape your mentality as we were heading into the
17 December 2020, January 2020 months? Was that in the back of your mind?

18 A Say that one more time, sir.

19 Q Your concerns about the voting and you all receiving the ballots in your
20 mailbox, was that shaping how you were viewing the rallies and our election in December
21 and in January of 2021? Is that fair to say?

22 A I think so.

23 Q So let's now transition to your decision to travel to D.C., okay. So President
24 Trump first tweets about the January 6th rally on December 19th. When did you
25 become aware of the rally in D.C. that was scheduled for January 6th?

1 A You know, I -- I can't honestly answer that. I'm sure it was some time in
2 December.

3 Q Okay.

4 A I mean, I don't know the exact moment.

5 Q No worries.

6 When did you decide, approximately, that you were going to attend the rally in
7 Washington, D.C.?

8 A I believe that was the first of January.

9 [REDACTED] I believe Mr. Kinzinger has a question.

10 Mr. Kinzinger. Yeah. Thanks.

11 Hi, Mr. Epps. Just real quick, because I don't want to go back to the Oath Keeper
12 thing again after we moved on twice. Just -- when you talked about the antifa side of
13 things, were you saying his goal was to kind of infiltrate and influence, like, partner, or
14 was it kind of influence and sabotage or stray differently? If you know that answer, I
15 was just -- I was just wanting to know.

16 Mr. Epps. I believe he was going to try to turn them to our way of thinking.

17 Mr. Kinzinger. Understood. Thank you.

18 Mr. Epps. Thank you.

19 [REDACTED]

20 Q Sorry. I missed that. When did you say you decided you were going to go
21 to D.C.? Can you just approximate? Was it the end of December? Is that what you
22 said?

23 A I believe it was -- I believe it was around the first of -- of January. It might
24 have been a few days before that. I -- I can look.

25 Q No worries. No. That's fine. Approximately is fine.

1 I guess, was anyone else in your family or any friends, were they going to the
2 rally? Is that what influenced you in wanting to go on January 6th?

3 A Well, my -- my son was going to go, and he had -- he had let me know that
4 he was going, probably the end of December, and our workload wouldn't allow me to go.
5 I mean, I -- I had too much going on. So -- and at that point, my wife found out that Jim
6 was going, and she insisted that I go because there was a lot of hype. I mean,
7 people -- you know, antifa stuff going on. All these -- you know, there was a lot of stuff
8 going on at that time, so she was worried for his safety, and so we decided to make
9 arrangements so that I could be there.

10 Q When you say Jim, is that your son's name, Jim?

11 A Yeah. Jim is my son. He's --

12 Q Okay. And so it sounds like, just to break that down a bit, your son had
13 invited you before you made the decision to go?

14 A Yes.

15 Q And you initially told him that you weren't able to go because you had work.
16 Is that correct?

17 A Yes, sir.

18 Q Thank you. And explain to us -- so your wife, then, stepped in and talked to
19 you about possibly going on January 6th?

20 A Yes, sir.

21 Q And what was the concern that your wife expressed to you about why she
22 wanted you to go with your son on January 6th?

23 A His safety.

24 Q What was the safety concern that you all might have had? You mentioned
25 antifa, but let's break -- let's just explain that a little bit more.

1 A It -- on the news, they're -- they're showing cities burning and different
2 things going on, and every place there was a demonstration, there was fires and people
3 getting shot, different things. And so she was quite concerned, and, you know, I had my
4 concerns as well. So we took -- we decided that it would probably be best that I go.

5 Mr. Blischak. [REDACTED] I don't mean to interrupt, but I think that he might want
6 to supplement his answer by stating that you wanted to visit some family relics.

7 Mr. Epps. Oh, absolutely. Yes.

8 Mr. Blischak. Could you explain that to him?

9 Mr. Epps. So our -- our family originated in Hopewell, Virginia. The peace
10 treaty was signed at the -- our family's property for the Civil War. We had a lot of family
11 history there. My son wanted to visit those things, and I -- I had went with my father
12 years before, before his passing, and so we wanted that -- that experience together.

13

BY [REDACTED]

14 Q So this turned into almost like a father-son trip where you did some
15 sightseeing --

16 A Yeah.

17 Q -- and you were going to go to the rally as well?

18 A Yes, sir.

19 Q What was the mood? What was your mood, like, the family mood when
20 you were deciding to go on this trip with your son?

21 A It was exciting. It was exciting. I wanted to show him everything.

22 Q Had you done this type of trip with your son before, going sightseeing in
23 Virginia?

24 A No, sir. No, sir. Eventually, we want to take our whole family there and
25 do it, the history and -- and what we had to live up to.

1 [REDACTED] Actually, can you pull up exhibit 1?

2 BY [REDACTED]:

3 Q I believe these were the text messages that you were just talking about
4 between your family, so I just want to pull that up, and I'll share it with -- the screen with
5 you so you can see.

6 Mr. Blischak. He's going to share the screen.

7 Mr. Epps. Oh, okay.

8 [REDACTED] And can we just scroll down slowly just so that Mr. Epps and
9 Mr. Blischak can read? Can you go back to the top -- I'm sorry, Jacob. Can you go back
10 to the top?

11 BY [REDACTED]:

12 Q So it looks like there's three people in this group chat. Do you recognize
13 this, Mr. Epps?

14 A Is that from my phone or my wife's?

15 Q I don't know. You tell me. It might be from your wife's phone.

16 A This is my -- this is my -- my son, Jim Epps. This is his wife, Bethany, and my
17 grandson.

18 [REDACTED] All right. Can we scroll down now, [REDACTED]?

19 BY [REDACTED]:

20 Q So this is January 1st. It looks like you send your itinerary. It says, "Dad's
21 booked to join you in D.C." Keep scrolling. And it looks like Ms. Bethany Epps says,
22 "Yea." It just seems like -- is this the excitement you were just referencing about
23 announcing you were going on the trip with Jim?

24 A Yes, sir.

25 Q What was your son's reaction to the news, if you recall?

1 A He was excited. He was excited because we get to do it together.

2 Q I just want to clarify because you said earlier that when your son first asked
3 you to travel to D.C. and you said, no, but then you changed your mind, it looks around
4 the new year to go with him, you didn't change your mind because you had been talking
5 to the FBI or law enforcement, correct?

6 A No, sir.

7 Q I'm sorry. I didn't hear it. Sorry. I just want to make sure it's clear.

8 A No, sir.

9 Q And just say it again. Why did change your mind? Like, what was January
10 6th going to be for you all at this time?

11 A Well, at this time, it was going to be a great vacation and get to see the
12 sights and -- and show him what I had done with my father earlier.

13 [REDACTED] Thank you, [REDACTED] You can take down exhibit 1.

14 BY [REDACTED]

15 Q So who purchased these tickets? Did you purchase your own tickets, your
16 own airfare?

17 A My wife. Yes, sir.

18 Q Ms. Epps. Ms. Robin Epps. Is that her name, your wife's name?

19 A Yes, sir.

20 Q And do you know when she purchased the tickets, approximately? Would
21 it have been the same day as what you sent?

22 A I believe it was the 1st, the 1st or the 4th. I -- I'm not sure. It was real
23 close to there.

24 Q Okay. And when did you -- I saw there was airplane tickets, I believe.
25 Where did you plan to stay when you arrived in D.C.?

1 A I -- I was hoping I could stay with my son. We looked -- we looked for
2 another room, and everything was booked, so -- yeah. So we -- we actually had
3 to -- he -- he let me stay there. His friend that was with us, he was -- he was the
4 youngest out of all of us, so he got to sleep on the floor. The hotel actually gave us
5 some extra blankets and stuff. The old man couldn't be on the floor, so we did okay.

6 Q And do you remember the name of the hotel where you all stayed?

7 A It was the Washington -- or no. Maybe the Washington Marriott.

8 Q Was it -- was it in D.C. or Virginia, Maryland? Do you remember where it
9 was?

10 A In D.C.

11 Q Okay. It was a Marriott is what you recall?

12 A Yes, sir.

13 Q We'll get into that a little bit more later. But before we get there, who is a
14 Mr. Nathen Jones? Do you recall that individual?

15 A Yes. Mr. Nathen Jones, he's a member of my church, and he put on a -- you
16 know, we have the -- the barn that people do different activities in, weddings and
17 celebrations of life and, you know, different things. He put on a first aid clinic for people
18 to come and learn about first aid. And when he was talking to us, he had served over in
19 Afghanistan, and he -- he had stressed to everybody that was there that Hey, anything
20 can happen any time. You need to have these things with you. They will save lives.
21 Put them in your truck. If you're going to a football game, put them in your pack. Put
22 them in something. Have them with you. You never know when you'll need it. So I
23 had end up purchasing from him some things to take with me on that trip.

24 [REDACTED] So let's pull up, [REDACTED], exhibit 2.

25 Q I think -- I believe these are the messages that you're referencing with

1 Mr. Jones, but I just want to make sure we go through them to make sure these are
2 correct.

3 So are these the messages, it looks like, with Mr. Nathen Jones?

4 A Yes, sir.

5 [REDACTED] And can you scroll down slowly just for us to be able to read.

6

BY [REDACTED]

7 Q It looks like you're asking for tourniquets. Is that correct?

8 A Yes, sir. So all the -- all the things he taught us how to use --

9 Q Uh-huh.

10 A -- I asked him for.

11 Q So I guess my overarching question is you asked for tourniquets in this text
12 message. You asked for combat gauze, breathing tubes. Why were you asking for
13 this? Was this for January 6th before you head to D.C.? Was this what you were
14 asking for?

15 A This is before I left, and this is what I was asking for because all the things
16 going on in the country at the time, I thought, you know, something could happen there.
17 I was hoping for the best, preparing for the worst.

18 Q So is it fair to say, were you -- maybe not anticipating, but you wouldn't have
19 been surprised if there was violence or something that required first aid at the Capitol?

20 A Correct.

21 Q And I'm sorry. I said the Capitol. Was it the Capitol specifically or in
22 Washington, D.C.?

23 A Washington, D.C. in general.

24 Q I guess, just help us understand your mindset on January 1st through 4th as
25 you're flying out to D.C., right. So it's supposed to be a fun kind of family vacation, but

1 we also see you packing first aid. So what is, like, your mindset as you're flying out to
2 D.C.?

3 A Like I said before, prepare for the worst, hope for the best. I was hoping
4 nothing would happen, but I carry these supplies in my pickup as well all the time.

5 Q Okay.

6 A I hunt. I carry these supplies.

7 Q So this wasn't specific, necessarily, to Washington, D.C. You carry first aid
8 for other events in your life routinely?

9 A Yes, sir.

10 Q As you were traveling with your son, did you share some of these supplies
11 with him? Did he carry some of these first aid supplies as well?

12 A No, sir.

13 [REDACTED] Did anyone have any follow-up, any of the members or staff,
14 about the first aid or the plans to travel to D.C.?

15 Mr. Kinzinger. [REDACTED], I do.

16 Just -- Mr. Epps, again, just -- would the mindset be comparable to -- for instance, I
17 pretty much wherever I go, I conceal carry. I certainly hope I never have to use it, but I
18 have it just in case. Would you say that is similar to you hope to never have to use first
19 aid? You have it just in case because, of course, when you don't have it is when you're
20 always going to need it?

21 Mr. Epps. Yes, sir.

22 Mr. Kinzinger. Okay. That's great. Thank you.

23 Q So, Mr. Epps, when did you arrive in Washington, D.C.?

24 A On the 5th.

25 Q What did you say, the 5th? Was it the 4th? Actually, let's pull up

1 exhibit 3.

2 A Maybe it was the 4th.

3 Q No worries. We'll pull up exhibit 3. It's your flight details. Does it
4 look right? It looks like you left on the 4th --

5 A Yes.

6 Q -- and then arrived in D.C. later that evening?

7 A Yes, sir.

8 [REDACTED] And, [REDACTED], can we pull up exhibit 4?

9 BY [REDACTED]

10 Q Is it correct that you also had a rental car for that -- those 3 days in D.C.,
11 4 days? Is that correct? Sorry. Just for the record.

12 A Yes, sir. Absolutely. I had a rental car.

13 [REDACTED] Thank you, [REDACTED].

14 BY [REDACTED]

15 Q So I want to stop here. So when you get to D.C. on January 4th, we talked
16 about your son inviting you out on December 27th. We talked about your decision
17 around new year, around the new year to travel with your son. And then you arrive on
18 January 4th. On exhibit 32, we have your phone records. We're not going to pull it up
19 right now, but it is an exhibit in the record right now.

20 And for the period between December 27th and January 4th, I just want to ask
21 you: Did you have any conversations or interactions with law enforcement when
22 planning your decision to come to Washington, D.C.?

23 A No, sir.

24 Q Did you have any communications or interactions with law enforcement
25 when packing first aid for your trip to Washington, D.C.?

1 A Not that I know of, no, sir.

2 Q Not that you know of? You just --

3 A I didn't -- I don't know of any officers that I ever talked to.

4 Q And going back to your travel out here to D.C., do you recall talking to law
5 enforcement officers or the FBI or anything once you arrived in D.C. on January 4th?

6 A No, sir. The -- the night of the 5th, I was -- I was trying to protect them
7 from the -- I don't know what the guy calls himself, Baked Alaska or something. He was
8 trying to incite violence on the police, trying to get other people involved, and I was -- I -- I
9 tried to calm him down. I don't -- I don't believe the police ever said anything to me.

10 Q So we'll get into the 5th --

11 A Okay.

12 Q -- actually, right now.

13 [REDACTED] But I would also like to note for the record that [REDACTED],
14 senior investigative counsel, has joined us.

15 Before I move on to the 5th and the 6th, does anyone have any follow-up about
16 the preparation and travel out to Washington, D.C.?

17 Mr. Kinzinger. One more question, if you don't mind.

18 [REDACTED] No worries.

19 Mr. Kinzinger. Thank you.

20 Mr. Epps, I just want to nail this down, you know, the perception in your mind.
21 So I'll preface this with obviously we had the riots over the summer, you know. I, for
22 instance, was activated with the Guard with those. Your perception was any possible
23 violence would not necessarily be from rally attendees or protest attendees. Your
24 perception, from what you had seen, is that maybe antifa would be out there trying to
25 infiltrate or create some kind of a violent situation. Is that correct?

1 Mr. Epps. That is correct.

2 Mr. Kinzinger. Okay. And you had seen reports, or had you heard reports
3 leading up to that, that potentially, you know, whether they had evidence or whether it
4 was just, you know, talking heads on television or radio that potentially antifa could be
5 there?

6 Mr. Epps. Yes, sir.

7 Mr. Kinzinger. Okay. That's it. Thank you, sir.

8 Mr. Epps. Thank you.

9 BY [REDACTED]

10 Q All right. So let's turn to the 5th. Before we talk about the 5th, when did
11 your son arrive in Washington, D.C.?

12 A A few hours after I did.

13 Q And did your son travel alone to D.C.?

14 A No. He had a friend, Zack.

15 Q Do you know Zack's last name? Do you recall? And if not, that's okay.

16 A I don't recall it offhand. I'm sure I could find it here. I met him -- that was
17 the first time I ever met him.

18 Q Okay.

19 A He works -- he's actually a superintendent for my son.

20 Q Okay. Thank you.

21 So let's turn to the 5th, then. Walk us through your day on the 5th, right. You
22 are all staying in the Washington Marriott. It's three of you all in the room. What do
23 you all do that morning of the 5th?

24 A We go across the street, get some breakfast, jump into the rental car, and go
25 to Hopewell.

1 Q So you all immediately went sight -- is that sightseeing on the 5th?

2 A Yes, sir.

3 [REDACTED], can we pull up exhibit 5, please.

4 BY [REDACTED]

5 Q Do you remember what time you all went sightseeing that morning, just
6 approximately?

7 A Yeah. You know, I -- I'm not sure what time that -- that picture was taken.
8 Looking at the shadows, I'm probably thinking 9, 10:00 in the morning.

9 Q So this looks like text messages.

10 [REDACTED] And you can scroll down, [REDACTED].

11 BY [REDACTED]

12 Q Are these pictures from your sightseeing on January 5th?

13 A Yes, it is.

14 Q Where did you all go sightseeing? You said the town, but where specifically
15 did you go?

16 A Hopewell. Appomattox Manor where the -- where the hospital -- you're
17 seeing it right there, the -- the Depot Field Hospital. That was all on Appomattox
18 property. We wanted to go over to Epps Island but didn't know how to get there. I
19 guess there's a way, but we didn't know how to get there. We spent time going to the
20 different churches, the cemeteries, looking for our names, our last name.

21 Q And what -- I guess this is south of Richmond, approximately, this area?

22 A Yes, sir.

23 Q I guess, what is it? Is it a Civil War site? What is the -- where are you
24 actually going sightseeing?

25 A It's all Civil War. Appomattox Manor was -- was Captain Francis Louis Epps

1 was -- came over from England. He was a ship captain. He brought people back and
2 forth. The King of England gave him 1750 acres, and that became Appomattox Manor.
3 It -- it was a plantation. The peace treaty for the Civil War was signed on that
4 plantation, and it stayed in our family until the mid '70s, the late '70s, and it was sold to
5 Parks and Recreation at that time.

6 Mr. Blischak. Rash is the name. Zack's last name is Rash.

7 Mr. Epps. What was that?

8 Mr. Blischak. Rash.

9 Mr. Epps. Zack Rash. Rash was the last name on Zack.

10

BY

11 Q Thank you. Thank you. Thank you for following up on that for me as well.

12 So it looks like you all were going sightseeing, it looks like, with family-type
13 history. Is that what you all were looking at?

14 A Yes, sir.

15 Q And what was the general mood on that morning?

16 A It was a great mood. We're -- we're proud of our heritage. My family
17 hasn't always been on the right side of history. Some of them were, and some of them
18 weren't. We -- we have a lot to live up to, I mean, and that's what we've tried to teach
19 our -- our children. And it's a trip that we plan in the future for our grandchildren, that
20 we all go and -- and show off this great heritage that we have.

21 Q Approximately how long were you all sightseeing that morning? Just -- was
22 it a few hours? Was it half a day? Just -- how long were you all down in Hopewell and
23 Petersburg?

24 A I believe until that afternoon and probably that evening. I mean, we drove
25 around a lot, looking at different things. Yeah, probably most of the day, three-quarters

1 of the day.

2 Q So when did you arrive back in the Washington D.C. area, or back in the city?

3 A I'm not sure. I --

4 Q It could be, like, generic. Was it nighttime, that evening, or just --

5 A I -- I don't believe it was dark yet, so it's -- it was probably 4-ish, 5-ish.

6 Q And when you returned back to D.C., what did you all do? What was your
7 next steps that day?

8 A It was kind of difficult, because there wasn't a lot of restaurants open, so I'm
9 trying to -- oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. I do remember. We had a gentleman that kept trying
10 to call me while we were gone, and he is from Arizona, and I don't -- just a second. I
11 can't find it here.

12 I believe his last name is Carver. He had called several times and tried to reach
13 us, so I called him back. He wanted to meet us for dinner. And I had met him one
14 other time at a VFW, and I didn't really remember him, but that's okay. So we met at a
15 small restaurant and had dinner.

16 Q So we saw in your call records an individual named Mr. Paul Carver on
17 January 5th. Is that the individual that was calling you?

18 A It was Paul Carver, yes, sir.

19 Q Did you all eat in D.C. or in the Virginia or Maryland side? Do you recall
20 where you all actually had dinner?

21 A It was in the Maryland side, I believe.

22 Q And so after you had dinner with Mr. Carver, I believe -- was your son with
23 you during dinner?

24 A Yes, sir.

25 Q And your son's friend as well?

1 A Yes, sir. Yes, sir.

2 Q Take us through what happened. What did you all do after dinner with
3 Mr. Carver?

4 A Went back to the hotel, and I went up -- I went up to the -- the top. I was
5 going to get some shut eye, call my wife and get some shuteye. And we -- that was
6 probably 8-ish or 9, and I -- actually, I spoke with some people in the hotel. I kind of
7 bored my son, so him and -- and his friend went out on the town. Not out on the town,
8 just walking around and stuff. And then -- do you want me to go into that?

9 Q Oh, no. So I was going to ask. Did you end up going out to any of the
10 protests or to Black Lives Matter Plaza or Freedom Plaza that night?

11 A Yes. My son gave me a call, let me know that there was a Trump parade
12 going on. There was a few problems down there. There was people trying to incite
13 problems with the police, so I went down and met him, and -- yeah. So I ended up
14 going. I think he said it was 11th Street, and I didn't know what Black Lives Matter or
15 BLM Plaza, I didn't know what that was, but that's where I ended up.

16 [REDACTED], can we pull up exhibit 6?

17 BY [REDACTED]

18 Q And I believe these are going to be the messages that you're referring to
19 with your son on the evening of January 5th.

20 [REDACTED] Before we go --

21 [REDACTED] Yep.

22 [REDACTED] Before we get to that, can I interrupt for a quick question, [REDACTED]?

23 Mr. Epps. Yep.

24 [REDACTED] Mr. Epps, you mentioned this gentleman, Mr. Carver, who reached
25 out for you. Did he know that you were coming to D.C.?

1 Mr. Epps. I don't think so. I hadn't talked to him before -- before that. I
2 mean, I -- I don't know how he would know, but he kept trying to call me, so --

3 [REDACTED] When is the last --

4 Mr. Epps. When he talked to me, he found out I was in D.C.

5 [REDACTED] I take it he was reaching out to you because he knew you were in
6 D.C. Does that -- or am I just assuming that incorrectly?

7 Mr. Epps. He may have known. I -- I don't know how he would have found out
8 because I -- I had not talked to him before that, since I met him the first time. In fact, I
9 didn't know who he was, but he was from Arizona, he was calling me, and we met up.

10 [REDACTED] Okay. Thank you.

11 BY [REDACTED]

12 Q So going back to exhibit 6, are these the text messages with your son that
13 you were just referencing?

14 You can scroll down a little bit, [REDACTED].

15 A Yes, sir.

16 Q So it looks like around 7:50 p.m. on January 5th, your son tells you that we
17 joined a Trump parade over on I Street if you wanna come over, and then you asked him
18 to send you a ping. Is that how you identified where your son was?

19 A Yes, sir.

20 Q So -- okay. Walk us through that. You go out and meet your son with the
21 Trump parade. Tell us what's going on then, once you arrive.

22 A We got there. There's a couple hundred people there, probably. The -- I
23 observed a guy over arguing with the police, and there was a line of police. There was a
24 line of police across there, and this guy was arguing with the police. Didn't understand
25 it. There was a few megaphones there, people trying to -- you know, there was

1 somebody screaming about -- oh, what's the guy's name? Screaming about one guy,
2 and then somebody else screaming about antifa, Ef antifa, all that kind of stuff. And
3 then people wanting to fight with BLM. And just, like, I can't believe this is going on.
4 These aren't -- are these Trump supporters? And what it was, I don't believe they were
5 Trump supporters. I believe that they were trying to get Trump supporters to -- to back
6 their cause.

7 So I -- I tried to deescalate it. I went over to the gentleman. Well, he's not a
8 gentleman. I went over to the guy that calls himself Baked Alaska and had words with
9 him, that this was not what we're about. We need to stay focused. You guys are -- are
10 not right. You shouldn't be doing this with the police. He was saying that the police
11 broke their oath, you know, calling them all kind of names and stuff. And I'm sure you
12 can go to their body cams and -- and find everything I was saying.

13 Q That's perfect. We'll pull that video up now. Before we pull it up, how did
14 you know the individual's name was Baked Alaska? Did you know this person?

15 A I found out later. I didn't know who he was --

16 Q Okay.

17 A -- at the time.

18 Q So at the time, you were engaging with an individual who you didn't know.
19 Is that correct?

20 A Exactly.

21 [REDACTED] Can we pull up exhibit 7, [REDACTED]?

22 BY [REDACTED]

23 Q And this is going to be a video of you from January 5th. I apologize
24 to -- we're going to play the entire video because I think it's necessary for context.

25 [REDACTED] So you can play that video now.

1 [Video playing.]

2 [REDACTED] Thank you, [REDACTED]

3 BY [REDACTED]

4 Q So I know we played -- that was a longer clip we played, but I thought it was
5 important for you to see kind of the entire context.

6 In the beginning, the individual you're talking to, Represents 1776, and you say,
7 it's about the Constitution. And you said it repeatedly, it's about the Constitution.
8 What do you mean by that?

9 A The -- the Constitution is greatest document ever. I believe -- this is my
10 own belief -- it was God-inspired. Almost every country on the planet uses our
11 Constitution to draft up their own. It's very important. If there was a -- a problem
12 with the election, we've got problems. We -- we need people to be confident in our
13 elections. That's what I meant by it.

14 Q So you say, we're here to do something as well. I guess, what were you
15 here to do, and when were you going to do it?

16 A We were here to protest our government and let them know that we're
17 not -- we're not real comfortable with -- with how this election -- I mean, it's
18 when -- when there's doubt in people's minds, this kind of stuff happens.

19 Q So I hear you just said that we're here to protest. But in the same vein, you
20 said that you may get arrested for saying this, that the group needs to go into the Capitol
21 the next day. Why did you think you could be arrested for saying what you were saying?

22 A I didn't. I was trying to -- to get some common ground. This guy was
23 trying to turn people against me. I didn't -- I don't know if I saw it there on that one, but
24 he was calling me Boomer, and it's his -- his generation's fault that we're in the position
25 we're in.

1 I -- I got caught up in the moment. I said that. I -- as -- as you can tell, I didn't
2 want to fight with anybody. I didn't want any violence. I was trying to prevent. If
3 you had footage, body cam footage from the police, you would even see more of me
4 trying to stop that kind of stuff.

5 Q What was the -- I guess the numbers? How did you feel out there?
6 Was -- were there people supporting you, or were you trying to just talk to a large group
7 by yourself? I guess, help us understand the dynamic out there as you were talking to
8 these individuals. Was it one against 100? Was it 50 versus 50? I'm just trying to
9 understand. As you were having this conversation, was anybody on your side out there?

10 A There was a few. There was a few. I -- I believe that the -- the ones with
11 the megaphones and cameras were the ones against what I had to say. They were the
12 ones that were trying to drive a different narrative, trying to suck people in.

13 Q So you said you needed -- that you all need to go into the Capitol. What
14 did you mean by that phrase, go into the Capitol?

15 A The Capitol is the people's House, and the rotunda -- people can go into the
16 rotunda and -- and see what's happening there. My vision was get as many people in
17 there as we can and surround it, be there, let them know that we're not happy with
18 the -- with what -- what has happened, and that was it. No violence.

19 [REDACTED] I would like to note that Mr. Adam Schiff has joined.

20 BY [REDACTED]

21 Q So at this time, on January 5th, you were under the impression that the
22 Capitol would be open on January 6th?

23 A Yes.

24 Q And by "open," I mean, like, open to visitors, like anyone could walk in?

25 A That's what I thought, yes.

1 Q And what were you basing this belief that the Capitol would be open upon?

2 Why did you think that?

3 A It was a weekday.

4 [REDACTED] I believe [REDACTED] and Mr. Kinzinger may have questions.

5 Mr. Kinzinger. Thank you.

6 Mr. Kinzinger. Mr. Epps, it's interesting. I've seen, obviously, the part of the
7 video that's made the round about the go in the Capitol. Seeing that in its full context, it
8 brings a quite different light on it.

9 One question I had specifically when you said, Go into the Capitol, and the crowd
10 chanted, No. In the short context, the one that's making the rounds, it looked like they
11 didn't agree. We should not go into the Capitol. I have a different perception seeing it
12 in the full context.

13 What was your -- and it's fine if it may be in the heat of the moment, but then in
14 those situations, you don't remember, but I'm curious. When they yelled No after the
15 Capitol, did you have a perception of why they were all saying no?

16 Mr. Epps. I -- I don't think I thought about it at the time.

17 Mr. Kinzinger. Okay.

18 Mr. Epps. I think I followed that up with peaceably.

19 Mr. Kinzinger. And it seemed to me --

20 Mr. Epps. Peacefully.

21 Mr. Kinzinger. And it seemed to me that they were -- their focus at that moment
22 was basically trying to incite violence that night. You were trying to stop violence that
23 night. Is that an accurate assessment on my end?

24 Mr. Epps. Yes, sir.

25 Mr. Kinzinger. Okay. That's all I have for the moment. Thank you, sir.

1 Mr. Epps. Thank you.

2 [REDACTED] Mr. Aguilar? Nothing. Okay.

3 [REDACTED]

4 [REDACTED] I have a question, if I could. Oh. I'm sorry. Mr. Schiff, please.

5 Mr. Schiff. Mr. Epps, I just want to follow up on that video. You said, well,
6 maybe I shouldn't say this. If I do, I'll get arrested, or probably get arrested, something
7 along those lines, and then you said, we should go into the Capitol. What made you
8 think that you might get arrested for urging people to go into the Capitol if you believed
9 the Capitol was open?

10 Mr. Epps. I don't know. It was the heat of the moment thing. I was trying to
11 find some common ground with these people and change their minds. It shouldn't have
12 been said, but I said it.

13 Mr. Schiff. Now, when you say it shouldn't have been said, which part are you
14 referring to, the going into the Capitol, or that it might get you arrested?

15 Mr. Epps. My being arrested.

16 Mr. Schiff. Okay. Thank you. I yield back.

17 BY [REDACTED]

18 Q I guess I just want to confirm. Is it -- did you not -- do you think you should
19 have said -- or you were comfortable saying going into the Capitol part because at that
20 time, on January 5th, you thought the Capitol was open to the public?

21 A Exactly. And peacefully.

22 [REDACTED]

23 [REDACTED] Mr. Epps, I just want to better understand why -- give me the context
24 you shared with us about what brought you down there. I understand that you were
25 concerned that there were people who were looking to fight the police and so forth, but

1 why did you feel that you needed to engage with these folks for -- you know, as -- sort of
2 vociferously and for such an extended period of time? I mean, these people, they're
3 yelling at you. They're telling you to stop. They're calling you names. Why did you
4 feel that it was important to continue to try and engage with them?

5 Mr. Epps. I believe that one person can make a difference. I always believed
6 that, taught my children that, and I really thought I could make a difference and not have
7 them suck people into what they were doing, fighting the police and different things.

8 [REDACTED] And you felt from their-- from sort of the rhetoric or the things that
9 were being said and yelled that they were maybe trying to stoke violence against other
10 folks?

11 Mr. Epps. I did.

12 [REDACTED] Thank you.

13 [REDACTED]

14 [REDACTED] Good afternoon, Mr. Epps. I just want to clarify what you mean
15 when you say, find common ground with them because I'm wondering if, in the context of
16 having watched that full video, it's fair to see that maybe you recognize those gathered
17 are interested in some form of lawlessness, and you want to prevent that in that
18 moment. Maybe by saying, I might get arrested, you're creating common ground where
19 you're expressing some willingness for something that might break the law, that might
20 make them listen to you even if you don't actually know or think that you would break
21 the law the next day. Does that make sense?

22 Mr. Epps. I never intended to break the law. It's not in my DNA. I've
23 never -- I'm sure you've looked up my record. I -- I don't break the law. It was
24 something stupid that I said. I regret it. It's caused me and my family many problems.

25 [REDACTED] No question. I guess, then, my simpler -- the simpler way for me to

1 ask it, then, is what do you mean when you're saying you're trying to find common
2 ground with them, and that's what leads you to say what you said?

3 Mr. Epps. Well, he was trying -- this -- this character was trying to turn people
4 against me and -- and trying to turn everything on me, and -- and I didn't want that either,
5 so --

6 [REDACTED] And so what about that scenario made you think that saying what
7 you did would give you common ground with them?

8 Mr. Epps. It wasn't a lot of thought put into it. It was a spur of the moment
9 thing. It just happened. I don't know. It -- I've been known to say things that I
10 probably shouldn't say, and I don't know. It just popped out.

11 [REDACTED] Fair enough. Thank you.

12 Mr. Epps. Thank you.

13

BY [REDACTED]

14 Q So at the tail end of that video, Mr. Epps, the crowd -- some people in the
15 crowd started chanting Fed towards you. Do you remember that?

16 A I don't. I even asked my son. I -- I had a hard time believing it at first. I
17 thought it might have been dubbed in or something. I -- I didn't hear it. My son said
18 he didn't hear it. So, apparently, they did. I think this is raw footage, right? This
19 hasn't been doctored, so --

20 Q But you and your son don't recall the Fed part of that video?

21 A We don't. We don't recall it.

22 Q What was your -- I think this might have been asked in other ways, or you
23 might have alluded to it, but I just want to make it clear. When you walked down to the
24 Trump parade after your son invited you, and you started engaging with these folks, what
25 was your goal walking around there that night?

1 A Keep -- keep people safe. If you saw some other footage, I was asking
2 people to please don't walk back by yourself. Walk with other people. That's who I
3 am. That's how I -- who I've always been. Keep people safe, help people if I can, and
4 kind of deescalate this thing, and not let people get sucked in by the wrong people.

5 Q And keep people safe from whom? Like, what was the safety concern
6 caused by?

7 A The -- the area in D.C. can be dangerous. I mean, there's gangs and
8 different things.

9 Q Was it deescalating the individuals you were talking to with their actions
10 towards the police, or did you see, like, other groups, counter protesters out there that
11 possibly could have been causing the issues that you were trying to deescalate?

12 A They were trying -- the only -- there's only a few that were -- by a few, I
13 mean five or six that were trying to incite violence with the police, trying to get other
14 people involved in it. And I kind of recognized what he was doing, this Baked Alaska.
15 He -- he would try to incite something and then stand off and film it and call it news. I
16 tried to get any -- I tried to get people not to -- to engage in that, so --

17  Mr. Kinzinger.

18 Mr. Kinzinger. Thank you.

19 Mr. Kinzinger. Did you have a perception, maybe at the time, that it's possible
20 that these could be antifa provocateurs trying to put a bad name on Trump protesters?
21 Was that a concern, or maybe it was just kind of somebody trying to create anarchy?

22 Mr. Epps. I think it was some of both. I mean, I didn't know what to think.
23 I -- I mean, they don't walk around with antifa or their forehead or -- or, you know,
24 anything else. But I didn't know who they were, but they had a different agenda than
25 the majority of the people that were there. It -- it was almost a party atmosphere for

1 everybody that was there that -- that had good intentions. The hotel I stayed at,
2 everybody was getting along. It was great. There was nobody like that there. So it
3 was more of a party atmosphere, good people and a good place. That's -- that's it.

4 Mr. Kinzinger. Roger that. Thanks.

5

BY

6 Q So were you with your son the entire time you were down on BLM Plaza?

7 A I think they left a little bit before I did.

8 Q Do you know approximately how long?

9 A I ended up walking back by myself.

10 Q Okay. Do you remember what time you returned back to the hotel, or just
11 give us an estimate about how long you were out there on the plaza?

12 A Oh, my gosh. It was -- it was a while. It was late when I got back.
13 I'm -- I'm not positive on the time. I mean, if we look at those texts, I'm sure you can
14 tell.

15 Q So I believe in the texts around 10:30, your son asked if you were still out
16 there. Does that seem --

17 A I've -- I've seen it since then. I never looked at my text while I was there,
18 so --

19 Q Okay. What did you do when you got back to the hotel that night after you
20 left? And, also, why did you leave, I guess is another question?

21 A Well, it started thinning out a little bit, and it wasn't doing any good. These
22 guys -- these guys were -- they were -- they were going to be that way, no matter what,
23 so I -- I decided to leave. A lot -- I -- I noticed when it started thinning out, most of the
24 grandmas and the grandpas and -- and those people were leaving. And when they were
25 all gone, I left.

1 Q So there was an article that was printed in the Arizona Republic shortly after
2 January 6th, and in it, you discussed this video specifically with the reporter. In the
3 article, you described your statement about going into the Capitol as the only thing that I
4 meant is we would go in the doors like everyone else. It was totally, totally wrong, the
5 way they went in, was what you were quoted as saying. What did you mean -- I think
6 you've alluded to this, but what did you mean when you said, Go in the doors like
7 everyone else? The doors to the Capitol, I'm assuming.

8 A Well, that's the way we get in if we go into any building, legally and without
9 force.

1

2 [2:02 p.m.]

3 [REDACTED] Did you expect that the Capitol would be secured on January 5th
4 if it wasn't opened?

5 Mr. Epps. If it wasn't open, yes.

6 Mr. Kinzinger. May I?

7 [REDACTED] Yes.

8 Mr. Kinzinger. Just on that real quick, did you -- had you heard any news or
9 anything about the Capitol being closed for COVID restrictions, or did you -- were you
10 under the impression that, again, it was open, you could go visit, all that stuff?

11 Mr. Epps. I was under the impression that it was open.

12 Mr. Kinzinger. Thank you.

13 Mr. Epps. I didn't think about it much. I mean, your perspective is your reality.
14 Arizona, we're pretty -- we don't worry about COVID too much. I mean, I --

15 Mr. Kinzinger. Yeah, understood.

16 Mr. Epps. I would expect it to be open. That's my answer.

17 Mr. Kinzinger. I think that, you know, given any other year, it would have been
18 open. I think that's important to note.

19 So thank you.

20

BY [REDACTED]

21 Q And you also said it was wrong the way they went in. How was it wrong?
22 You're talking now in retrospect. How was it wrong when everything went in compared
23 to how you were envisioning the 6th going in on January 5th?

24 A They used violence to enter our Capitol, violence and breaking windows and
25 different things. I wasn't aware of any of that until later on and seeing it on the news

1 like everyone else. That's not -- that's not law-abiding, and we're law-abiding people.
2 Without law, it's anarchy. It's not good. Without government, there's anarchy. It's
3 not good. Any government is better than no government.

4 Q At any point on January 5th -- so we've asked you this question about
5 December 27th through January 4th, but now let's just focus in on January 5th. Did you
6 coordinate or speak with any law enforcement officials from the FBI?

7 A No, sir.

8 Q The Metropolitan Police Department?

9 A No, sir.

10 Q The CIA or NSA?

11 A No, sir.

12 Q Any other law enforcement officials, other than the other folks you
13 mentioned earlier, you might have interacted with at the plaza as you were deescalating?

14 A No, sir.

15 [REDACTED] I believe [REDACTED] has a followup.

16 [REDACTED] Actually I was going to move on to later that evening.

17 BY [REDACTED]:

18 Q Mr. Epps, you said that your son and his friend went back to the hotel before
19 you did or they left the area before you did?

20 A Yes, sir.

21 Q Did they go -- did you see them back at the hotel?

22 A Did I see them back at the hotel?

23 Q Yeah. Or were they out somewhere else?

24 A No. We went back to the hotel. I saw them at the hotel.

25 Q It looks like from the phone records -- and the timing may be off because of

1 the way that the phone company reports them, but it looks like you had a lengthy -- or
2 140 seconds, so what's that? That's not even 3 minutes -- conversation with your son
3 just after midnight.

4 Is that possible that you guys were separated still at that point, or were you back
5 to the hotel room?

6 A Yes, it is possible. I had to walk back. We had a rental car, but we were
7 doing a lot of walking because you had to pay for parking. It was hard to get parking
8 spots, so --

9 Q Okay. And then you had -- just shortly after that, just after midnight, you
10 had a conversation with someone from an area code [REDACTED]. It's not one of the
11 numbers that we were able to identify.

12 Have you had a chance to look through those numbers and see if you could figure
13 out who that person could be?

14 A Yes. Give me one moment. Okay?

15 Q Thank you.

16 A That was on the 5th? Right?

17 Q Looks like it's just after midnight, so it will show as the 6th.

18 It looks like you talked to the same -- had conversations with the same number
19 the following day, a couple short, very short calls, and one longer one late in the day.

20 A You know what, if we could take a short break --

21 Q Sure. And we can come back to this. I don't want to interrupt the flow
22 here.

23 [REDACTED] We've been going over an hour. Let's take a short break and
24 come back on at 2:15 eastern time. I believe that will be 12:15 your time.

25 Mr. Epps. That would be great.

1 [REDACTED] Okay.

2 Mr. Epps. Thank you very much.

3 [REDACTED] All right.

4 [Recess.]

5 [REDACTED] Okay. We're going back on the record at 2:16 p.m. Eastern time.

6 I believe Mr. Epps has additional counsel in the room now. Can you please
7 introduce yourself for the record?

8 Mr. Andrew Blischak. Andrew Blischak here for Mr. Epps.

9 [REDACTED] Okay.

10 [REDACTED] I think you were asking Mr. Epps questions.

11 Mr. Epps, were you able to confirm that number during the break?

12 Mr. Epps. Yes, I am. That was -- tell me the time again? 12:17? Is that
13 correct?

14 [REDACTED]

15 Q It looks like there was a call just after midnight on the 5th, so the morning of
16 the 6th, very early on the 6th, and then a call later on the 6th as well of 530 seconds, so
17 almost 10 minutes.

18 A So, at 12:17, January 6th, that morning, that call was with my son, Jim Epps.

19 Q Yes.

20 A And then the next call at 12:19 was with my brother, Scott or Darrell Epps.
21 I'm not sure which because it was their company. It shows up as 911 Heating and
22 Cooling.

23 Q Got it.

24 A You have to remember, in Arizona, it was earlier than it was where we were
25 at.

1 Q Yeah. So it was the call with your brother, or one of your brothers that I
2 was referring to. So thank you very much. I just wanted to make sure for the record
3 that we identified that call that night.

4 Do you remember why you would have talked to your brother that night?

5 A Did he call me, or did I call him? Let's see.

6 Q It looks like it's an outgoing call, so that means you called him.

7 A Just calling him to let him know how things were going and what I observed
8 that night.

9 [REDACTED] Okay. Thank you, [REDACTED] That's all I have on that.

10 BY [REDACTED]

11 Q Going back to the common ground answer you gave us earlier, did you
12 receive any deescalation training or anything like that while you were in the military, Mr.
13 Epps?

14 A You know, we did a little bit of that. They trained us to do riots a little bit,
15 not a lot.

16 Q And another followup I had, just to make sure, did you use any encrypted
17 messaging applications during this time, like Signal?

18 A No, sir.

19 [REDACTED] Okay. Did anyone else have any questions about January 5th
20 before we move on to January 6th?

21 BY [REDACTED]

22 Q Did you have another phone that you used during that timeframe, another
23 cell phone?

24 A Another cell phone, no, sir.

25 Q You didn't have a burner phone or some other phone that you were using

1 temporarily or for -- you know, other than the phone that was registered to you?

2 A No, sir.

3 Q And is that true during that entire week, you didn't use a phone, any other
4 phone besides the one that we've just been looking at the phone records for?

5 A No, sir. I had no other phones.

6 [REDACTED] Thank you.

7 BY [REDACTED]

8 Q All right. So let's move on now to the morning of January 6th.

9 So, on the night of January 5th, you stay in the room with your son and your son's
10 friend. Is that correct?

11 A Yes, sir.

12 Q So let's walk us to the morning. You wake up. Tell us what you all did the
13 morning of January 6th.

14 A The morning of we got up early. We went across the street. There's a
15 convenience store that has a little kitchen in it. We got some breakfast sandwiches and
16 headed out to the plaza and got there early. There was quite a few people there but not
17 a -- the crowd hasn't shown up yet.

18 Q So do you know approximately what time this was you arrived in the plaza?
19 You said it was early; the crowd wasn't too large. Just give us an estimate approximately
20 what time it would have been?

21 A Probably 6-ish, 6 to 7, somewhere in that range.

22 Q Why did you all go out so early that morning?

23 A Well, we didn't want to be in the back, wanted to be in the front, and
24 wanted to -- if something was going to happen, I want to know where the vehicles are at.
25 If there was an EOD -- I mean, you know, explosive ordinance of any kind, if there's

1 vehicles in that area, just get in an area and know the surroundings and know the escape
2 routes.

3 Q When you say "get there early," are you referring to the rally at the Ellipse?
4 Is that where you went that morning?

5 A The -- yes, sir.

6 Q And it sounds like you were trying to make sure you were aware of escape
7 routes or any types of possible danger. What -- again, I've asked you this question about
8 other days, but what was your mindset heading into the January 6th rallies themselves?

9 A That there could be problems, you know, with everything that had happened
10 previous to that, things you watched on the news, Portland, places on the East Coast as
11 well.

12 So my mindset was keep safe, avoid potential problems.

13 Q What was the general mood? Right? You said, on January 5th, people
14 you described as pretty happy, it sounded like, other than the few disturbances. What
15 was the general mood on the morning of January 6th?

16 A It was kind of a party atmosphere. Everybody was there, happy, in a good
17 mood. It was good. I mean, everybody seemed happy.

18 Q And in terms of preparing for escape routes or danger, where do you
19 normally get your information, I guess, to inform of possible threats or the climate when
20 you go to an event; any sources? Or just describe those for us.

21 A Just watching the news, Fox in general at the time.

22 Q Was your son -- I think you said your son was with you when you went out
23 there to the rally that morning?

24 A Yes, sir; my son and his friend.

25 Q And did you stay for the start of the rally, I guess, when you all arrived?

1 A The rally started, yes, and we stayed. We were there for the beginning,
2 yes, sir.

3 Q Approximately how long did you all stay for the rally? I guess, do you
4 remember what speaker you might have seen? Just describe to us the rally.

5 A All the way up to President Trump.

6 Q Why did you leave when President Trump started speaking?

7 A There was a group that started running towards the Capitol. I mean, they
8 were moving quite fast, and so I just thought, you know what, I want to be in the front; I'll
9 get up there.

10 And, on the way there, I noticed that it was some of the same people that were
11 there the night before. They had blow horns. They were trying to incite people and
12 stir things up. I thought it important that I get up there, and I did.

13 [REDACTED] Mr. Kinzinger?

14 Mr. Kinzinger. Thank you.

15 Let the record show you have been joined by a 4-day old.

16 Mr. Epps, I want to ask you, you talked about the mindset getting to the rally and
17 getting there early and the escape routes. Was it your possible understanding that
18 maybe there would be provocateurs, be it antifa, be it a terrorist attack, anything like
19 that, and that's what you were, in essence, mentally preparing for?

20 Mr. Epps. Terrorist attack, antifa, all of it was a threat, so, you know, it's better
21 to be prepared than not, so --

22 Mr. Kinzinger. I understand. Thank you.

23 Mr. Epps. Thank you.

24

BY [REDACTED]

25 Q So you said that you started heading towards the Capitol before President

1 Trump started speaking because you saw a crowd of folks running in that direction.

2 Is that what you said?

3 A Right. And I believe he had started speaking.

4 Q Okay.

5 A But he wasn't too far into his speech.

6 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] can we pull up exhibit 9, please? And we can play that.

7 It's a video.

8 [Video shown.]

9 [REDACTED] Thank you [REDACTED] You can take it down.

10

BY [REDACTED]

11 Q So around what time were you instructing other rally attendees to go to the

12 Capitol? What time was this in the video, if you can recall?

13 A That's before the rally.

14 Q Okay. That was before the rally, any speakers started speaking at the rally?

15 A Right.

16 Q So, at this time was it your intention to go to the Capitol when President

17 Trump was done speaking?

18 A Yes.

19 Q And, I guess, where did you get that idea? Why did you have the idea to go

20 to the Capitol after President Trump's speech?

21 A It was pretty common knowledge that everybody was going to go to the

22 Capitol. I was just trying to help out.

23 Q And so, if it was common knowledge -- I'm just trying to understand -- why

24 were you instructing the crowd to go to the Capitol after President Trump's speech?

25 A I was pointing in the direction of it, trying to show them where it was at and

1 making sure that we would be there.

2 Q Did anyone tell you to announce this direction to the crowd to go to the
3 Capitol after President Trump's speech?

4 A No, sir.

5 Q Any law enforcement official advise you to instruct the crowd to go towards
6 the Capitol after President Trump's speech?

7 A No, sir.

8 Q What was your purpose, I guess? What was your goal in instructing people
9 to walk to the Capitol after President Trump's speech?

10 A As I said before, there was some -- I had some questions about the election.
11 It wasn't -- it wasn't -- a lot of people had problems with the election, be it for different
12 reasons. I thought it was important that our elected officials know we had a problem
13 with the election. We shouldn't have a problem with the election.

14 Q And so --

15 A It should be obvious who won, and there shouldn't be room for doubt, so --

16 Q I understand.

17 So you said you started walking to the Capitol, and you saw a crowd of people
18 walking or running towards the Capitol. And just help me understand. This was before
19 or after President Trump started speaking?

20 A I believe it was right after he started speaking.

21 Q Okay. So President Trump starts speaking around noon. Is this around
22 the same time, I guess, now that you start walking towards the Capitol? Is that fair?

23 A About that time, yes, sir.

24 Q And who are you walking with during this time? Who were you walking
25 with to the Capitol, if anyone?

1 A I wasn't walking with anybody. I called a few people out on the way there
2 that had megahorns -- you know, megaphones that were trying to incite things and, you
3 know, tried to get them to stop, and then we were at the Capitol.

4 Q What were the people with the megaphones saying that made you want to
5 say something to them and then what --

6 A It was the same rhetoric that they were spreading around the night of the
7 5th: F antifa, George Soros, and all -- the same stuff.

8 Q And what were you saying to them in response?

9 A It's not about that.

10 The one gal was saying -- you know, trying to get everybody all riled up about
11 antifa. And I told her: I think you're probably antifa trying to incite things.

12 And she stopped and ran ahead, but --

13 Q So I want to make sure I've got this straight. At this time, you're
14 not -- you're not with your son or his friend anymore at this point?

15 A No.

16 Q Do you know where they were, your son and his friend?

17 A I don't. I don't know where they were.

18 Q Approximately when did you all get separated? Was it during the rally or
19 just when you started walking towards the Capitol?

20 A When I started walking towards the Capitol. I'm not sure how long after I
21 left that they left.

22 Q And I guess -- because you explained earlier that Ms. Epps, in particular, kind
23 of talked you into going on January 6th to, one, have a family trip, but also to look out for
24 your son. Is that fair?

25 A Yes, sir.

1 Q So just help me understand then why you would leave your son during the
2 rally to move on to the Capitol.

3 A I -- we were taking turns on the corner trying to keep our seats. Your seats
4 would disappear pretty quick, so we were kind of taking turns doing that. We did get
5 separated. I'm not sure what my thought process was there, except I needed to be in
6 the front. I don't know how long they left -- I think they probably left pretty soon after I
7 did. I don't know. I don't have an answer to that.

8 Q No worries.

9 You said you wanted to get out in front just now. I guess -- and I think you have
10 alluded to this before, but what were you trying to get out in front of as you started
11 walking towards the Capitol?

12 A Well, there's a few different reasons. One, we were freezing our butts off.
13 It was cold out. If we were going to get in the Capitol, I wanted to be inside. My son
14 since has referenced the same thing. We weren't dressed properly for it.

15 Two, I didn't want any fighting to break out or any -- you know, it going in the
16 wrong direction.

17 Q So at this point --

18 A Marines are always in the front, not in the back.

19 Q So, at this point, you're still under the assumption that you're going to be
20 able to go into the Capitol, the Capitol was open?

21 A Yes, sir.

22 Q And what was the mood of the crowd as you were walking in the direction of
23 the Capitol shortly after noon on January 6th?

24 A The people that were -- like I said before, there weren't that many, but it had
25 started at that point.

1 The megaphones and all that, it was more of a -- it changed. It was more of a
2 "we've got to get there now" type -- How do you explain it? It was like it was an urgency
3 to get there. And I didn't really understand it, but I wanted to be there to see what was
4 going on, so --

5 Q You said you didn't really understand it. What did you perceive, I guess,
6 the urgency to be centered around?

7 A I didn't at that point. I didn't. But the majority of the people that were
8 going up, going up early, they were not your grandmas and your grandpas. You know,
9 they weren't us fat guys.

10 Q What were the people that were going over early? Do you recall what they
11 were dressed in, I guess the demographic of their age? Do you recall any of those
12 details?

13 A You know what, the age, probably mid-twenties to mid-thirties. I didn't
14 notice any uniforms or any of that until we got up there.

15 And, off to the left, as I was looking at the Capitol, that first barricade, if you
16 looked off to your left, I noticed a group, there may have been 20 or 30, and they looked
17 like they were in uniform, kind of a khaki-looking uniform with an orange hat. I didn't
18 know who they were. And I thought to myself they're not -- and they started going the
19 other way for a moment. And I thought, well, they've got something else going on that's
20 not a part of this.

21 Later on my son had told me that he saw that as well. I don't know who that
22 was. I'm sure you could identify them if you look at the film.

23 Q So the part that stood out, was it the orange hats you said? That's how you
24 kind of recall?

25 A The orange hats and I think it was khaki or green -- I'm not sure -- uniforms.

1 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] can we play exhibit 10, please?

2 [Video shown.]

3 [REDACTED] Thank you, [REDACTED]

4 BY [REDACTED]

5 Q So, just to help us again with the timing, approximately, if you left around
6 noon, what time do you think you arrived at the Capitol? Like, did you stop anywhere?
7 Did you go straight to the Capitol?

8 A Straight to the Capitol. I think I stopped to use one of the rest rooms.

9 Q So, approximately, about an hour, 30 minutes? How long did it take you to
10 walk down to the Capitol?

11 A It didn't take that long. I'm not positive. Maybe 20 minutes.

12 Q So it looks like you're on the west side of the Capitol here and you're talking
13 to an individual in the plaid red shirt or jacket.

14 So you're not with your son at this point?

15 A No.

16 Q And describe the scene here. Is this right when you first arrived at the
17 Capitol, or had you been there for some time? Just help us understand how long you
18 had been there in this --

19 A Right when I got there. I don't recall saying that to him. I told a lot of
20 people that day to drop things. They were carrying sticks or picking up sticks or bars or
21 whatever they had. I said to a lot of people: You need to put that down. You could
22 get shot. That kind of stuff.

23 I don't recall doing that at that point because my mindset changed when I saw the
24 barricades. I knew we weren't going in. I mean, it just wasn't going to happen. It's
25 not in my DNA to break the law.

1 I don't know. I can't -- I don't know how they got footage of that because I don't
2 know -- I don't ever remember saying that at that point, "when we go in." I don't
3 remember that.

4 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]?

5

BY [REDACTED]

6 Q Once you saw the barricades, did that sort of convince you that the Capitol
7 was not open for business, you know, as we discussed a little while ago?

8 A Yes, sir.

9 Q And did you consider just going back and joining up with your son at that
10 point?

11 A Well, I figured at that point we would all be together, and they would see us
12 outside the gate.

13 Q Okay. But you did say "when we go in" to that guy in the video? Right?

14 A I don't remember saying that to him, not at that point, no.

15 Q Okay. But did you still think that you might be heading past the barricades
16 at some point?

17 A I don't recall. My mindset changed at that point. The only way to get in is
18 get past that, and I didn't plan on going in after I saw that.

19 [REDACTED] Okay.

20

BY [REDACTED]

21 Q At that time, did you think that the individuals that you were surrounded by
22 were going to try and break through the barriers?

23 A No.

24 Q What did you think of the folks that you were just talking about -- I mean,
25 you described that they were carrying sticks and other items. What did you think they

1 had these sticks for?

2 A I didn't -- I didn't see a lot of sticks until after it had escalated a lot further.
3 I didn't see a lot of that stuff. That's why I have a hard time believing that that was said
4 right then. I don't know what to say about that. I don't recall that happening.

5 Q So you saw the video just now. And why would you engage with this man
6 or, let's say, it's another person right outside the west side of the Capitol? Why were
7 you walking around engaging with individuals?

8 A Because they were trying to incite the police and cause problems with them,
9 and I just thought I could do some good, but I couldn't deescalate it.

10 Q When you say "incite the police," how were they trying to incite the police?
11 Describe their behavior.

12 A Calling them oath breakers and, you know, they're on the wrong side, calling
13 them every name in the book. I mean, there was a lot of name calling, a lot of things
14 like that, pretty much that.

15  Mr. Kinzinger.

16 Mr. Kinzinger. Mr. Epps, would you say that was a pretty high adrenaline
17 moment, kind of, you know, a lot going on, you're trying to take in a lot of details and act?
18 And also was there still maybe a concern at this point in the back of your mind that there
19 could be -- and I know I keep going back to this, but there could maybe be antifa seeded
20 throughout trying to provoke something bigger? Was that a concern?

21 Mr. Epps. You know, at the time, I knew that there were people there trying to
22 do other things from the night before, and it was pretty much the same that morning as
23 well.

24 Mr. Kinzinger. And pretty high adrenaline, a lot going on?

25 Mr. Epps. A lot going on. A lot of people -- it's almost like a rage. These

1 guys -- and you saw it shortly after that. It's almost like they were in a rage the whole
2 time, like they were losing their minds. I didn't understand it, but that's what was going
3 on.

4 Mr. Kinzinger. Thank you.

5 Mr. Epps. They definitely had an agenda.

6 [REDACTED] Approximately how long were you walking around engaging with
7 individuals like this saying, for example, "don't take this in" or "let's calm down"? How
8 long were you walking around the west side of the Capitol doing that for?

9 Mr. Epps. Not very long. I mean, it happened pretty dang quick.

10 [REDACTED] That's a great segue. [REDACTED], could we play exhibit 11? It's
11 another video from, I believe, shortly after this video we just watched.

12 [Video shown.]

13

BY [REDACTED]

14 Q Okay. So do you remember when this conversation -- do you recall talking
15 to this individual with their hat on backwards?

16 A I do.

17 Q Can you help us orient when this conversation happened versus the
18 one -- the video before, exhibit 10, that we just watched?

19 A I believe -- I'm trying to remember because there was fencing here and then
20 a sidewalk that went up, and I think that's where that last one that you're showing
21 me -- it happened so quick. I mean, they were there. This guy with the hat on
22 backwards, I've never met him before, but he was trying to cause problems.

23 And what you didn't see there is he ran right up to the fence and started rocking it
24 back and forth. And then I went out and talked to him and told him, Okay, you know,
25 that's not why we're here. You've got to be peaceful, pulled him back and told him, It's

1 not what we're about. It's about -- the same thing I had been saying before.

2 Q So let me get this straight. He had been shaking the fences before you
3 went up and spoke to him?

4 A Yes, sir.

5 Q And what did you think he was about to do? What made you want to go
6 up to him specifically to talk to him?

7 A Well, he was trying to shake the barrier down.

8 Q Did you think he was trying to break through the barrier to get to the Capitol
9 or just shake it in front of the Capitol Police?

10 A I didn't know. But something I noticed, these guys, all of these guys, they
11 knew what they were doing. This wasn't the first time they've done this. They would
12 push -- when they were -- when the police were trying to keep them out, they would push
13 and push and push so the police would push back so they couldn't break it down. And
14 then they would step back and pull it towards them, and the police would fall down, and
15 then they were in. They've done this before. This isn't a first-time deal for them. I
16 mean, I wouldn't have thought about doing that.

17 Q What was your reaction -- or actually, before, did the individual say anything
18 back to you after you told him, Don't do this?

19 A I don't recall him saying anything.

20 Q What was your reaction when -- because this was approximately a minute
21 later, about 12:55, the individual with the hat on backwards pushes through the
22 barricade. What was your reaction to the individuals pushing through that fencing?

23 A I believe I said, "No, no, no."

24 Q I guess if you're saying, "No, no, no," why did you follow the individuals up
25 the walkway?

1 A Trying to keep them from doing more damage and talking them down,
2 deescalate it.

3 Q How did you think that you were going to be able to talk them down?
4 What was your -- I guess, I know things are going fast, and I know sometimes when things
5 are going fast, you're not able to fully flush out the plan. But what was your plan that
6 moment to deescalate once individuals pushed through the barricade?

7 A The same thing I had been doing. I positioned myself in between them and
8 the police, and I had my back to the police. I was trying to talk them down, not to let
9 them do that -- I mean, not to have them do that.

10 There was a lot of people there that I think was getting sucked into it as well.
11 There were a few pro -- I can't even talk right now -- guys inciting the violence, and then I
12 think there was some other people that got sucked into it, the heat of the moment.

13 I tried to prevent that from happening and was able to for some time because the
14 left side fell first; the right side fell; and then my -- the middle where I was going back and
15 forth fell last. Had there been more of us, maybe we could have prevented the whole
16 thing.

17 Q So tell us what you observed as the individuals -- as the protestors were
18 going up the walkway. What was going on and what were you doing as individuals were
19 continuing to progress closer to the Capitol?

20 A They were running up. I did a little jog -- I don't run no more. I did a little
21 jog and got up there with them.

22 [REDACTED] And, [REDACTED]

23 [REDACTED] Yeah. Before we leave that spot, [REDACTED], do we have the text
24 message or the -- yeah, the text message from Jeff with the photo?

25 [REDACTED] It happens after the fact. It happens after. Do you want to do

1 that now? Because I was going to hit that -- I believe the text came after this event, so I
2 was keeping it chronological.

3 [REDACTED] Yeah. If we could pull that up now, it would be helpful.

4 [REDACTED] Let's see, that is 16, [REDACTED]

5 Mr. Epps. Jeff is my brother-in-law.

6 BY [REDACTED]

7 Q So, Mr. Epps, did you say Jeff is your brother-in-law?

8 A Yes.

9 Q That's your wife's brother?

10 A Yes, sir.

11 Q And this is a text exchange that he had with your wife, I think, the day after,
12 and he says, "Your very" -- let's go to the top of that.

13 Oh, wait a minute. It might be a different one.

14 [REDACTED] No. This is the exhibit that we have.

15 [REDACTED] But the upper part of that text message might be a different photo.

16 BY [REDACTED]

17 Q So there's a text where Jeff says to your wife: Your very naughty husband
18 is not wearing a mask. You better put him in the doghouse for 2 weeks to quarantine
19 when he gets back. COVID-19 is no fun.

20 Do you know what I'm talking about?

21 A Yes. He is a nurse.

22 Q Okay. Well -- and I don't know, [REDACTED], if you're able to find that one, but in
23 connection with that text message, he sends a photo that I believe is of you talking to the
24 guy with the red hat and the white hoodie on that we've just seen in the video.

25 A Yes, sir.

1 Q Did you know that Jeff was there at the time, or was he there at the time?


2 A No. He was not there. He lives in California, Palm Springs, California.

3 Q Do you know how he got that photo that he texted to your wife?

4 A I do not.

5 Q Okay. So he got his hands on the photo and sent it to your wife, but you
6 don't think he took it -- well, he wouldn't have taken it himself?

7 A No. He said -- I believe in the text it says something about -- geez, I'm not
8 computer savvy or any of that stuff, challenged. What is that called, the messaging --

9  The picture looks like it's from Philip Crowther, C-r-o-w-t-h-e-r.
10 It's a Twitter picture that it looks like he's texting, not a picture that he actually took.

11 Mr. Epps. Okay, it came over on Twitter. Sorry about that.

12 

13 Q Okay. And so, when Jeff says in that same text message -- and I know you
14 don't have it in front of you -- actually your wife says first: Oh, my gosh, where did you
15 get the photo?

16 And then Jeff responds: I am surprised he didn't clock that kid fighting the cops.
17 But he tried.

18 So Jeff wasn't there to see it. He didn't know it was happening, and presumably
19 he accessed some video and was commenting on that?

20 A Well, I believe he meant he tried; I tried to talk him down; I tried to stop it.

21 Q But how would -- what would make Jeff think that you had tried to stop it, if
22 you know?

23 A He saw the video.

24 Q Okay.

25 A And he knows who I am.

1 Q Got it. Okay. Thank you.

2 A Thank you.

3

BY [REDACTED]

4 Q And, just to confirm, this is a conversation that happens the following day in
5 this text message, correct?

6 A I wasn't involved in that. I believe it did happen the next day.

7 Q Okay.

8 A And then I wasn't aware of that conversation until the 8th when I got home.

9 Q Okay. Thank you.

10 So let's go back. You said you were -- you all, the individuals, were going up the
11 walkway to the west side of the Capitol. Were individuals battling with the police?
12 Like, what did you see?

13 A Was individuals -- say again?

14 Q Battling with the police? Was there violence? What did you see?

15 A I saw people doing that, yes.

16 Q And how were you trying to deescalate at that time, if you were?

17 A At that point, I wasn't. I was in the crowd. I was trying to figure out what
18 I was going to do.

19 Q Okay. So, as people were pushing through, I guess, new entryways, you
20 were just kind of in the crowd following them up towards the Capitol?

21 A Right.

22 Q When did you decide, if there was a moment, that you were, like? Okay,
23 I'm going to step in and deescalate now"?

24 A Well, there's a fence by -- there was a scaffolding there, and there was a
25 fence right in front of it, the fencing that they had put up, the barricade. And so they

1 had more police officers there at that time, so they were holding their ground. I got up
2 in between the fence and the people and tried to deescalate it.

3 And I did talk to some of the officers. You can talk to the officers, their body
4 cams, whatever, and I was trying to deescalate it, witness to that, trying to keep it from
5 going further.

6 [REDACTED] can you play exhibit 13, please?

7 I believe this is a video referencing you trying to deescalate.

8 [Video shown.]

9 [REDACTED] Thank you, [REDACTED]

10 BY [REDACTED]

11 Q Is this what you were just describing to us about trying to deescalate
12 between the police and the protestors?

13 A Yes, sir.

14 Q And you said at one point: We made our point.

15 Like, just walk us through what you're saying, how you're saying it, what you're
16 trying to do in this very moment, if you remember.

17 A Everybody's here. Everybody's here, and they're very aware that we're
18 here. We made our point. We don't need to escalate it any further. It needs to stop.
19 I don't know. It was a mess.

20 Q So, at this point your goal was no longer to go into the Capitol?

21 A No, sir.

22 Q And is it fair to say at this point you were trying to prevent other people
23 from thinking they were going into the Capitol?

24 A Yes, sir.

25 Q How did the individuals that you were talking to respond back to you as you

1 were telling them that we've made our point?

2 A I don't remember. I got called a lot of names that day.

3 Q How long did you do this, did you deescalate? How long were you walking
4 back and forth doing this?

5 A You know what; I'm not sure. Whenever that -- whenever they got to that
6 point -- I'm sure you've got some idea. Whenever they got to that point until it broke, I
7 was there the entire time.

8 Q So, when it broke, did you follow the crowd into -- did you leave the Capitol?
9 Tell us what happened once --

10 A I took a couple of steps in, and I just looked around, and I was sick. There
11 was a lot of tear gas, a lot of bad stuff going on.

12 So I started to leave, and I heard somebody screaming for a medic. So, at that
13 point -- I had my first aid kit. At that point, I went in. I went up where I found an
14 individual that was laying on the ground. He was lifeless. I knelt down on one knee
15 and took his vitals. His heart was fibrillating almost. It wasn't beating properly, and he
16 was not breathing.

17 And another medic showed up, somebody that is a medic. I'm not a medic. I
18 have had EMT training, but I'm not current. I started -- I said: He's not breathing. I
19 was getting ready to do CPR.

20 And he said: Let's find out if he's epileptic.

21 And he asked him if he had a seizure, blink your eyes if you did. And he blinked
22 his eyes. And at that point we picked him up and started getting him out.

23 And I lost my voice at that point because I was telling people: Emergency,
24 emergency. Please clear the way.

25 And we got all the way out to the lawn down by the road. We had to cross one

1 road. We got to the lawn. There was a tree. We propped him up on the tree. I got
2 my phone out. I was trying to call 911, and he called me off. He said: I don't need
3 911. I'm fine.

4 And that was the end.

5 I looked back. I saw people crawling all over the Capitol, climbing the walls. It
6 made me kind of ill to my stomach. I decided to go back to the -- there was no point in
7 going back. It had gone beyond to what I wanted it to be.

8 Q So you said you took a couple of steps in. Where did you take a couple of
9 steps in? I want to make sure we're understanding. You said you took a couple of
10 steps in?

11 A It's like a platform. I walked into the platform, and the tear gas and all of
12 that kind of overtook me. I'm looking at him. I'm just thinking, crap. Now what?
13 And I started walking back out, and then I heard somebody yelling for a medic, and that's
14 when I went back up.

15 Q So the platform on the outside part of the West Plaza; is that what you're
16 saying?

17 A No. I think it was the platform before you go into the building.

18 Q Oh, before you go into the building. Okay.

19 A That's where the guy was laying, right there.

20 [REDACTED] Okay.

21 [REDACTED] I'm going to go a little bit out of order. Can we play exhibit -- let's see, can
22 we play exhibit 15, please?

23 [Video shown.]

24 [REDACTED]. Thank you, [REDACTED]

25 BY [REDACTED]

1 Q So is this the platform that you said you took a couple of steps up to? Is
2 that -- do you recall that?

3 A That's on another side of the Capitol.

4 Q Okay. So that's the Capitol around 2:12 p.m. at that initial breach point
5 before the window was broken. So you weren't up that high on the Capitol area?

6 A I wasn't anywhere near that, no. I didn't know that.

7 [REDACTED] Okay.

8 [REDACTED] can you pull up exhibit 14?

9 So the exhibit I just played for you was footage at the Capitol on the west -- upper
10 west terrace at 2:12 p.m.

11 It looks like this is a text message with "Daylin" or "Dalin" Epps. Is that how you
12 pronounce it? I'm sorry. How do you pronounce the name?

13 Mr. John Blischak. Pronounced Dalin; isn't it?

14 Mr. Epps. What's that?

15 Mr. John Blischak. He asked how do you pronounce Dalin's name?

16 Mr. Epps. "Dalin."

17 [REDACTED] Who is Dalin Epps, first of all?

18 Mr. Epps. He is my nephew. He's 28 years old.

19 [REDACTED] Okay.

20 And can we scroll down just a little bit to the middle of the page [REDACTED]

21 All right. Perfect.

22 BY [REDACTED]

23 Q So it looks like, around 9 a.m., your nephew texts you: You and Jim be safe.

24 And then, at 2:12 p.m., on January 6th, you text back: I was in the front with a
25 few others. I also orchestrated it.

1 This is the exact same time of the video that I just played. Help us understand
2 this text. What did you mean by "orchestrate"? What did you orchestrate?

3 A I just meant that I got -- you have to understand our relationship,
4 uncle-nephew. We hunt together. We fun with each other. We do that kind of stuff.

5 What I meant by "orchestrate," I helped get people there.

6 At that point, I didn't know that they were breaking into the Capitol. I didn't
7 windows had been broken. I didn't know anybody was in the Capitol. If I answered
8 him, that means I was on -- at 2:12, I was on my way back to the hotel room.

9 Q Okay. So, at this point, you're now away from the Capitol Complex?

10 A Exactly.

11 Q All right. And when you say, "I was in the front with a few others," what
12 time are you referring to? What are you referring to, "I was in front with a few others"?

13 A I was in the front.

14 Q I guess I'm just trying to understand. I guess what we would like to
15 understand is why are you telling your nephew this at this time?

16 A I was pretty proud that we were all there. I mean, I wasn't proud of some
17 people, but, for the majority of the people there, they were pretty peace-loving people.
18 I mean, they were like me. The atmosphere was good except for those people that
19 were trying to take it in a different direction.

20 Q And the people that were trying to take it in a different direction, were these
21 the type of people that you were talking to to deescalate throughout the morning and on
22 January 5th?

23 A Right. The same type of people on the 5th as well.

24 Q Going back to walking up the platform, I want to make sure I understand.
25 Did you go up like stairs at all?

1 A There's several levels of that. Yes, I did go up some stairs.

2 Q Was it the ones under the scaffolding or was it --

3 A Scaffolding. I never got over to the sides. I was in the middle by the
4 scaffolding. That's the big area. I call it the middle because the left side fell and then
5 the right side fell and then the middle fell.

6 Q Okay. And you stayed kind of in the middle area that entire time?

7 A I stayed in the middle area the whole entire time until we carried the guy
8 out.

9 [REDACTED] Does anyone, any members or staff, have any follow-up questions
10 about this text message?

11 Mrs. Murphy. [REDACTED] I do. This is Rep. Murphy.

12 Sir, can you -- you keep talking about this type of people, the people who wanted
13 to take it in a different direction. Can you tell me who you thought those people were?

14 Mr. Epps. I honestly can't. I don't think -- I assumed that they were probably
15 some antifa. I don't know. I have no clue who they were.

16 Mrs. Murphy. So, as you were engaging with them and trying to, as you said in
17 different moments, get on their side, get on their good side, relate to them, connect to
18 them, you weren't trying to connect to them as fellow Trump supporters, but you were
19 trying to connect to them -- can you help me understand that if you thought they were
20 antifa how you were trying to connect to them?

21 Mr. Epps. Well, it wasn't mostly trying to connect with them. It's trying to let
22 everybody know. I'm upset with the two guys. If -- you know, we all have our issues
23 here, but this is how it is: We've got to be peaceful. We've got to do this the right
24 way.

25 Mrs. Murphy. Okay. Thank you.

1 I yield back.

2 [REDACTED] Any other questions from members or staff?

3 [REDACTED] Hey [REDACTED] It's [REDACTED]. If I could just jump in quickly.

4 BY [REDACTED]

5 Q Mr. Epps, I work with [REDACTED] on the committee staff. Thanks again for
6 being here.

7 I just want to understand a little bit more your use of the word "orchestrated." It
8 sounds to me like, at this point, when you sent this text, you had turned away in part
9 because of seeing some things that you didn't agree with and were moving back to your
10 hotel. Is that right? Like, when you sent this, you were already on your way away
11 from the Capitol because of concerns of people taking it in a different direction?

12 A Right.

13 Q But you used the word "orchestrate." It's almost like you're sort of taking
14 some ownership over it, whatever that is. So I'm just trying to understand why that
15 word "orchestrated" was used because it sounds like you're sort of adopting the whole
16 thing, including the stuff that you were walking away from.

17 A It was me being -- how do you say? You would have to understand the
18 relationship between me and my nephew. It's just -- yeah, I took credit for it, but I
19 didn't know what I was taking credit for.

20 If you scroll down on that, you know, later on, Did you go into the Capitol? I
21 didn't answer him because I didn't get back on the phone. But I can't believe what I'm
22 seeing, the damage these morons did. I mean, that's when I found out what had
23 actually happened there. We had this much to see. We didn't see the whole picture.

24 Where I was at, it wasn't that bad, but the guy -- except the guys that were trying
25 to orchestrate something different.

1 I wasn't talking about the damage and all that stuff. Getting people there, yeah,
2 I was taking credit for it. I was taking --

3 Q I see.

4 A -- credit for it.

5 Q I didn't mean to interrupt you. I'm sorry, Mr. Epps.

6 A Not a problem. Thank you.

7 Q So you were proud of orchestrating the energy, the march to the Capitol, the
8 expression of strongly held views about the election, but not the violent part, the part
9 that made you turn away?

10 A Yeah, exactly. I mean, it's an embarrassment. It's -- it took away -- what
11 they did took away from everything. Who's going to listen to anybody when something
12 like that's going on?

13 Q Yeah. Well, it's interesting to me that you watch these videos, and you
14 emerge as a leader. You're there trying to talk to people, talk sense into people. No
15 one appointed you or asked you to do that, but you took that upon yourself. Tell me
16 more about those decisions. Did you see yourself as an orchestrator or a leader?

17 A No. I just -- I know in my mind what I wanted to see, and that was a
18 peaceful demonstration. I wanted our elected leaders to see that we had problems with
19 the election, and there shouldn't be doubt in Americans' lives -- Americans' minds about
20 an election. I think we failed -- or we failed -- I think the elected officials failed us
21 because there was doubt in people's minds. There shouldn't be doubt, not like that.

22 There's always somebody saying, Oh, it was stolen. I mean, that's been going on
23 for eons. But this time, having experienced it myself with five ballots coming to my
24 house, ballots are sacred almost. They're hard to get. I mean -- or they should be. I
25 had valid concerns with that. And I know that I heard a lot of stories. Yeah, they're

1 stories, but those stories I never heard before on ballots, on different things like that.

2 So I wanted you guys to know, hey, we have a problem with this. We need to
3 change this so it doesn't happen again.

4 Q Yeah. No, I appreciate that.

5 Your perspective is that there were concerns, and you were proud of being there
6 to express your concerns and continue to be proud of orchestrating that, that expression
7 of concern about the election?

8 A "Orchestrating" is the wrong word. Okay.

9 Q Okay.

10 A I don't know what the right word is, but "orchestrating" -- my wife has told
11 me over and over, You shouldn't say things that you don't -- you know, I shouldn't have
12 used that word.

13 Q What's a better word now? If you -- upon reflection and listening to the
14 good advice of your wife, which all of us should always do, what would have been the
15 better word, Mr. Epps, to use in terms of characterizing your conduct?

16 A I helped get people there.

17 Q I see. Fair enough. I appreciate that. Thank you.

18 A Thank you.

19 BY 

20 Q To follow up on that, you helped get people there, but what was your goal in
21 helping getting people there?

22 A Exactly what I said before, to do a peaceful demonstration. We -- it's all
23 about peaceful. When someone -- I don't care what your cause is; when somebody
24 hijacks it -- and that's exactly what these people did. They hijacked this cause. When
25 they hijacked it and it turned the other way, all credibility was lost. I didn't want to see

1 that happen. We've seen that happen before.

2 Q And you said that you had concerns. I understand you received multiple
3 ballots is what you said, and so you had concerns about the election. So, going back a
4 little bit to what you said to [REDACTED] were those concerns and the stories you heard
5 exacerbated or increased by what you heard from news sources or elected officials about
6 the election?

7 A Oh, I'm sure.

8 Q Was it exacerbated by --

9 A It validated my concerns.

10 Q Okay. Was the President's rhetoric about the election, for example,
11 something that might have influenced about how you felt about the election?

12 A I'm sure he played a role in it.

13 Q I want to also talk about, there's another --

14 [REDACTED] Can you scroll down a little bit, [REDACTED], in this text message. I had
15 another question.

16 Okay.

17

BY [REDACTED]

18 Q So I believe in this message with your nephew, you said: I think a few got
19 sucked into the heat of the moment.

20 It might have been on another page. But what did you mean by in the heat of
21 the moment?

22 A I believe that -- well, let's back up a little bit.

23 The year leading up to this, people were losing their businesses. I think I heard
24 that 110 restaurants were closed for good, one of them being one of my friend's. COVID
25 was rampant. People were locked down. There was all kinds of stuff going on.

1 I believe people went there for answers. People wanted to know what's next.
2 And I believe they were emotionally charged. A lot of people were emotionally charged
3 and could have got sucked in.

4 So, when these guys tried to hijack it, I think some innocent people, people that
5 meant well, probably were emotionally charged and did some things they normally
6 wouldn't do.

7 Q And your opinion, just to make sure I understand your answer, is through
8 some of the anxiety from the past year, COVID and maybe economic anxieties and then
9 the issues that you perceived about the election, is that a fair kind of encapsulation of
10 some of those anxieties that had pent up?

11 A Yes, sir.

12 [REDACTED] Thank you.

13 [REDACTED] you can take the exhibit down, unless anybody else has other questions.

14 Thanks, [REDACTED]

15 Mrs. Murphy. Actually, one more thing, [REDACTED] This is Rep. Murphy.

16 Sir, if I can paraphrase what I think you're saying is that there were Trump
17 people -- Trump supporters there who were peacefully just trying to show their presence
18 because they had concerns about the election.

19 You believe that those who moved the event in the different direction, a more
20 violent direction, were actually not Trump supporters but rather antifa.

21 Can you tell me why -- and then there were some Trump supporters who got
22 caught up in that moment because they were being encouraged by antifa. Is that about
23 right?

1

2 [3:08 p.m.]

3 Mr. Epps. I think so. You know, I don't know. I can't say that they were
4 antifa. I just know that -- I went to one other Washington march, and it was a 9/12
5 march, and it was totally peaceful. There was -- I think there was one arrest, somebody
6 that there was to cause problems. They arrested him. They weren't part of it. There
7 wasn't a piece of trash left on the ground when we left. I mean, people -- I physically -- I
8 mean, I am a witness to people picking trash up to make sure that the lawns were clean.
9 That's what I expected these people to be, the same people that -- that was at the 9/12
10 march.

11 And no one tried to hijack that one. Yes, there was people yelling, and there was
12 megaphones and it was all that, but it was a peaceful demonstration. That's America to
13 me, not trying to hijack somebody's cause.

14 Mrs. Murphy. So what led you to believe that these hijackers were antifa?
15 Like, why would you -- why would -- why was that the first thought that you had about
16 who these people were?

17 Mr. Epps. Well, watching what happened in Portland and across America, antifa
18 taking the -- you know, they were taking the credit for it. And who else would it be? I
19 didn't know anybody else that would do it.

20 Mrs. Murphy. Okay. Thank you, and I yield back.

21 [REDACTED] Thank you, Mrs. Murphy.

22

BY [REDACTED]

23 Q Have your views on this, that it was antifa infiltrating, has it changed now,
24 looking back over a year?

25 A Not -- not really. I -- you got to remember, I haven't been watching the

1 news. I turned the news off in January. It was quite depressing. And in order to get
2 through this, I had to turn the news off. And that's all-news channels. We have not
3 watched it this whole time. It would drive me insane, so we just turned it off, so.

4 Q So going back to January 6th, you leave the Capitol -- all right. So you sent
5 that text to your nephew around 2:12, so approximately if that's kind of a time point
6 would you estimate that you left the Capitol grounds?

7 A Yes.

8 Q Around that time?

9 A Yes, sir.

10 Q Okay. And where did you go when you left the Capitol?

11 A I was making my way back to the hotel room, and our phones -- I tried to call
12 my son several times. I'm sure you see that on the phone records. The phones
13 weren't working really well, and the batteries were going dead. I tried to plug in my
14 address -- or the hotel, and it took me to the wrong -- there's several Marriott hotels in
15 D.C., so I end up at the wrong hotel. I went inside. They told me how to get to the
16 next one.

17 I -- I came outside, I started walking and somebody -- there was ambulances
18 everywhere, things going on. Somebody told me, you need to take your Trump -- your
19 Trump hat off and hide it. I said why? And they said, Well, they just shot two Trump
20 supporters down the street and -- because they had their Trump stuff on. So I put that
21 away. I found a gentleman that had just pulled up, he had a Trump hat on, he was in a
22 car, and I told him, I'd be glad to pay you to take me to my room. But we just had a
23 shooting down the street and they shot two Trump supporters. So he said he would do
24 it. He didn't want it to be paid. He took me to my hotel and I went upstairs.

25 Q And did you watch news of the coverage at the Capitol at all that evening?

1 A Started watching the news, and that's when I found out how bad it really
2 got.

3 Q And what were your thoughts, as you were watching the news coverage of
4 how bad it was getting at the Capitol?

5 A That this was -- it was very sad. It saddened me. You know, it was
6 terrible what happened.

7 Q Were you with your son at this point when you got back to the hotel -- or
8 when were you able to connect back with your son?

9 A Well, Jim and his friend were back, and they got separated in the crowd.
10 Jim was helping people trying to get them out of there, some older ladies and stuff. So
11 they got separated. So his friend got back to the hotel before I -- before he did. And
12 we had heard that -- well, the shootings that I told you about, I was quite concerned
13 because I thought that it might be them.

14 Then his friend showed up, and Jim didn't show up for quite some time, so we
15 were quite concerned. I couldn't leave there because if he showed up, then he'd go
16 back. There was a curfew approaching, and anyway, he showed up so it all worked out.

17 Q So your son arrived at the hotel before the curfew?

18 A I believe so, yes.

19 Q What did you all do the rest of the evening? Did you just watch news
20 coverage or -- what did you all do?

21 A We watched the news.

22 Q And what was your son and his friend's view of what they were seeing?
23 Was it all the same as what you were thinking?

24 A Say again.

25 Q Did your son and his friend, did they have the same views about what they

1 were watching on the news as what you just talked about as your views?

2 A We were all sickened.

3 Q When did you go back home to Arizona?

4 A We -- the 7th we actually got up and went and did the tours or -- different
5 tours in Washington, D.C., the monuments and different things. And -- let me
6 think -- yeah. I hope I get this right. So we saw all the tours and all that stuff -- or we
7 saw all the monuments and stuff, and then I had to be back at the airport, like, 5 or 6. I
8 flew through the night. I got home at approximately midnight and I went to bed. And
9 then the next day, you know, you've already talked about my brother-in-law. He had
10 already contacted my wife and that's -- we get into that next section.

11 Q Got you. Okay. So I just want to recap, then, January 6th. Did you talk
12 to any FBI agents at all while you were in D.C. on January 6th and 7th?

13 A Not that I'm aware of.

14 Q Anyone from the CIA or NSA?

15 A Not to my knowledge, sir.

16 Q Did you talk to Metropolitan Police Department officers or Secret Service or
17 anyone like that?

18 A Not to my knowledge. The -- the officers on the steps, I apologized, I talked
19 to them that way, you know.

20 Q When you -- when you were saying the things that you were saying on
21 January 6th, when you were deescalating or when you were whispering to the guy with
22 the hat on backwards and telling him to calm down or anything, were you doing that
23 because you had been instructed to do so by the FBI or CIA or NSA?

24 A No, sir.

25

1

2

BY

3

Q Mr. Epps, asked you if you had talked to anyone. Did you

4

communicate in any other way with any law enforcement officials, FBI or otherwise?

5

A No, sir.

6

Q So no text messages, no other type of communication with anyone in law

7

enforcement that day?

8

A No, sir.

9

Thank you.

10

Do any Members or staff have any follow-up questions?

11

Voice. None here.

12

BY

13

Q So Mr. Epps, along those same lines, you're aware that we've looked at your

14

phone records from January -- actually, we've looked at your phone records from

15

December 19th through January. Are you aware of that?

16

A Yes, sir.

17

Q So it is exhibit 32, for the record, but I want to go through some of these

18

numbers, specifically on January 5th and 6th, that you either called or texted, just

19

to -- just to see who they are, to see if they are with the FBI or law enforcement, anything

20

like that. So I'm ready when you are. Are you ready?

21

A Let's see here. You're going to go from the 5th?

22

Q Yeah. I'm just going to call out some numbers, and I'll give you a chance to

23

look to confirm, but there were incoming text messages, three on the 6th at

24

approximately 5 p.m.

25

A Just a second. I got to find text messages.

1 Q And I'll give you, it's a [REDACTED] number, [REDACTED] --

2 A What's the date on it again?

3 Q It's a [REDACTED] number. There's a text message at approximately -- there were
4 three: One at 5:02 p.m., 5:14 p.m., and then another one at 7 p.m.

5 A January 5th?

6 Q Excuse me?

7 A January 5th?

8 Q January 6th.

9 A 6th?

10 Q Yes.

11 Mr. Andrew Blischak. Okay. We're looking at some text messages from the 6th
12 right now. Dalin, though.

13

BY [REDACTED]

14 Q No. Sir, I just want to ask, do you recognize a number, [REDACTED], and I
15 believe the subscriber information we had was a Ms. Diana Weaver? Does that -- do
16 you recall that individual?

17 A Never heard of that person.

18 Q And you didn't respond back?

19 A A lot of calls.

20 Say again?

21 Q You didn't respond back. Is there any circumstance -- or do you receive
22 calls that you don't respond back to or texts that you don't respond back to?

23 A We get calls all the time because my number is listed on the -- on our
24 business, both my wife's and I's, and so I get a lot of spam and different -- different calls
25 that I don't respond to, no.

1 Q And we saw another call on January 5th from a Mr. Paul Carver. I believe
2 you mentioned that one earlier. Does that sound familiar?

3 A Yes, sir.

4 Q And Mr. Carver, does he work for the FBI or CIA or NSA, to your knowledge?

5 A Not that I'm aware of, sir.

6 Q And you all did not discuss plans of inciting a riot or anything on January 6th?

7 A No, sir.

8 Q We saw calls on January 6th from Mr. Scott Epps. I believe you mentioned
9 that one earlier. Is that your brother?

10 A Brother.

11 Q And what was the nature of your calls with him on January 6th, if you recall?

12 A Tell him what was going on, what I observed.

13 Q And your brother as well, is he an FBI agent or work with the CIA or NSA?

14 A No, sir.

15 Q There were calls on the evening with a Mr. Darryl Epps. Who is Mr. Darryl
16 Epps?

17 A That's my brother.

18 Q Okay. And same nature of the call with him on January 6th probably?

19 A Exactly.

20 Q And then Ms. Robyn Epps -- there were calls and text messages on January
21 5th and 6th -- that's your wife, correct?

22 A That's my wife.

23 Q So with the calls with Mr. Scott Epps, Darryl Epps, Ms. Robyn Epps, these
24 were calls to family members?

25 A Yes.

1 Q Were you just recapping the days? Is that fair?

2 A We talk a lot.

3 Q Yes. I imagine with Ms. Robyn Epps, in particular. A Mr. James Trout,
4 there were texts in the afternoon of January 6th. Does that name ring a bell, Mr. James
5 Trout?

6 A He is a neighbor down the street. He lives at the end of my street.

7 Q We've already gone over your nephew, Dalin Epps. Do you recognize a
8 Mr. Christopher Hupke? It's a [REDACTED] number, and there were texts on January 6th.

9 A What did the texts say, sir?

10 Q We don't have that information. We just have that there was incoming
11 text messages, and they came in approximately 4:25 on January 6th. There were three
12 incoming text messages, and you did not respond back to any of them.

13 Mr. Andrew Blischak. Why don't you look in --

14 Mr. Epps. One second.

15 That was on the 6th, correct?

16 BY [REDACTED]

17 Q Correct.

18 A And what number was it?

19 Q It was [REDACTED].

20 A This is something to do with Twitter and something to do with Twitter. I
21 don't know what it is. I didn't open it, and I haven't responded.

22 Q Thank you. There were texts on -- with a Mr. Robert Neves, N-e-v-e-s. Do
23 you recall that individual?

24 A Nev.

25 Q It was incoming at around 8 p.m. on the 5th.

1 A I'm sorry, yeah, that's Bobby. Bobby, he's -- he's the guy that set up lodging
2 at our place. We -- we have a -- a barn that we rent out, but with that barn is a house
3 that they get ready in on weddings. But we can also let people use that for staying, and
4 he set up lodging for a women's shooting team that came into town. And they also shot
5 some video there as well.

6 Q So this wasn't a conversation with an FBI agent or CIA individual or NSA
7 official?

8 A No, sir.

9 Q Mr. James Epps, we saw calls and texts on January 5th and 6th. Just to
10 confirm, that's your son, correct?

11 A That's my son, yes, sir.

12 Q Mr. Darren Wright. It was an [REDACTED] number. It was an incoming text and
13 outgoing text on January 6th, and let me get you the time. It was at around 1:59 and
14 2 p.m. on January 6th, and this is a Utah area code.

15 A You know, I'm wondering if that is actually Zack, Jim's friend. I'm pretty
16 sure that's probably him.

17 Q So just to be clear, your son Jim, where does he live?

18 A He lives in Payson, Utah.

19 Q And did his friend come from Utah as well?

20 A Yes, sir.

21 Q Okay. There was a call on January 5th with a St. John's Episcopal. Do you
22 recall that?

23 A I do. We were actually in Hopeville -- what's it called.

24 Q I think Hopewell, Virginia, correct?

25 A Yes, sir. And there is a church there with a cemetery and our family names,

1 is in that cemetery, and we wanted to go into the church where our family attended
2 before. So we were calling that number to see if we could get in, and we never got an
3 answer.

4 Q There were two incoming text messages at around 3:52 -- they actually
5 might be the same text because they're both at the exact same time -- from an
6 [REDACTED]. You did not respond back, but do you know what this number is?

7 A I do not.

8 Q Okay. And again, you said you received texts and calls because your
9 number was listed on your website for your company?

10 A A lot of spam, a lot of different things like that, and a lot of clients as well.
11 So, or what that's about.

12 Q And then the last number where we saw outgoing and incoming texts was a
13 [REDACTED] number. We have done our own research on this, and there has been
14 public reporting that this sometimes shows up on people's phone records, and it's not a
15 specific number for anyone. It just sometimes shows up on phone records, so --

16 A I have never heard of it. I couldn't find it on my phone either. I'm not
17 sure how you got that.

18 Q Thank you for looking through your phone for that number.

19 A Thank you.

20 Q And so, again, January 6th through -- going backwards -- through December
21 19th when President Trump first tweeted about this rally, did you speak with the FBI?

22 A No, sir.

23 Q Did you speak with the CIA?

24 A No, sir.

25 Q Did you speak with the NSA?

1 A No, sir.

2 Q Did you speak with the Metropolitan Police Department?

3 A No, sir.

4 [REDACTED] Thank you. Does anyone else have any -- any Members or staff
5 have any follow-up questions there?

6 Mr. Kinzinger. I have a question quickly. And if you're going to go here,

7 [REDACTED] I'll hold on to it but just about kind of life sense.

8 [REDACTED] I'm going to hit that -- I'm going to hit that, Mr. Kinzinger.

9 Mr. Kinzinger. I'll stand by.

10 [REDACTED] Thank you.

11 BY [REDACTED]

12 Q I meant to ask, any Federal agencies at all, did you talk to any Federal
13 agencies prior to January 6th?

14 A No, sir.

15 Q Thank you.

16 So let's think now post January 6th interactions. You mentioned your
17 brother-in-law. Is that how you became aware that you were possibly listed on the
18 FBI -- FBI list post January 6th?

19 A Yes, sir.

20 Q Tell us about that, how you found out you were on the list and then what
21 you did afterwards?

22 A As I recall, he had sent a text to my wife, and it had a picture of me on it.
23 And she -- she asked him how he got it, and he said it came over Twitter or something,
24 and can you download it or something. And he wasn't able to. And then later came
25 back and said that I was on the FBI's -- most wanted list for information. And I didn't

1 find this out -- and I believe it was on the 8th -- and I had immediately, after we talked to
2 him -- we called him and talked to him about it and immediately after, we got off the
3 phone with him, called the FBI 1-800 number.

4 Q Okay. I actually -- just to make sure we're talking about the same list or
5 poster.

6 [REDACTED] can you pull up exhibit 18 for me, please.

7 Is this that -- and if you could scroll in or zoom in to, I think it's person 16.

8 A Yes, sir.

9 Q Is that the graphic you saw of yourself on January 8th?

10 A Yes. He actually had a film of the whole thing, the guy shaking the fence
11 and all that. And then I'm not sure if he sent this -- yeah, he probably sent this as well.
12 But that's the one he was referring to, yes.

13 Q [REDACTED] can you pull up exhibit 19. I believe these are the text messages
14 about the FBI list that we were just talking about. And can you scroll down. You see
15 picture 16, it looks like.

16 Is this your brother-in-law by the way? It's a 951 number.

17 A 951. What are they talking about? No, that is not.

18 Q Okay. Well, we can scroll down a little bit. So it's an FBI list link, and then
19 it looks like you say back, it kinda sucks when you get a call from your brother-in-law that
20 you're on the Most Wanted list as a person of interest. And this is on January 8th.

21 A Right.

22 Q So this is approximately when you found out?

23 A I think that was after the call to the FBI.

24 Q Okay.

25 A Yeah, that was after I called and I was on hold forever with -- on the FBI.

1 Q Perfect. Thank you, [REDACTED] You can take that down.

2 So tell us about that. You called the FBI hotline. We saw it in your records and
3 your phone records as an 800-225-5324 number, and that you called it on January 8th.
4 How did you find this number to call?

5 A It was on -- I believe it was on the ad that they had read, people that they
6 wanted to talk to. So we called that -- called that number, yes.

7 Q So between the time that you found you were on the FBI list, how long
8 between that did you call the hotline?

9 A As soon as we hung up with my -- my -- my brother-in-law, we called.
10 Within a minute.

11 Q Why did you want to call so quickly? What was going through your mind?

12 A Well, I wanted to -- I wanted to straighten them out, let them know what
13 happened.

14 Q So approximately how long did you talk to the FBI? Your records show it
15 was about an hour, but how long did you talk to them that day? Was it the full hour?

16 A It was not. I talked to someone, I told them who I was. They said okay, I
17 need you to hold for a minute. And then I was on -- I was on hold for quite some time.
18 They asked me a few questions. I think they recorded it. You probably have that. I
19 answered those questions. It's been a year ago. I don't even remember what they
20 asked me, but I answered all the questions and then we hung up.

21 Q And do you recall what the next steps were? Did they tell you next steps
22 after the phone call? Did you leave the call knowing what was going to come next?

23 A I did not, no.

24 Q And was this -- this was your first time, it sounds like, talking to the FBI, on
25 January 8th?

1 A Yes, sir.

2 Q And this was after you became aware that you were on the FBI list, correct?

3 A Absolutely.

4 Q So let's see, can you pull up exhibit 20, Jacob. And it looks like it's an [REDACTED]
5 number, and you can scroll down.

6 It looks like on the 12th, in the morning, you ask, "Any suggestions on a good
7 attorney?" So what happened between January 8th and January 12th?

8 A We -- my wife has a girlfriend that she grew up with, and she was dating a
9 gentleman that was an attorney, and he had suggested to her, call me -- I'm not real sure,
10 but the suggestion was made that I need an attorney. So I -- I text him that, and I
11 believe he called me after that.

12 Q Okay. You can take it down, [REDACTED].

13 So did you hire an attorney on this day, on January 12th?

14 A Pretty close to that, yes, sir.

15 Q And who did you hire at this time?

16 A I hired Mr. Blischak.

17 Q And did you have any more interactions with the FBI after hiring your
18 attorney, or was the only one still on the 8th?

19 A No. The -- Mr. Blischak let the FBI know that he was representing me, and
20 they set up a meeting a few months later. And we were -- I was interviewed by the FBI.

21 [REDACTED] Perfect. So we're going to pull up exhibit 21, and these
22 questions are probably going to be answered by Mr. Blischak because they're actually
23 your communications with the FBI, Mr. Blischak, so thank you for providing those with us.

24 And can we scroll down to the bottom if it's in reverse chronological order, [REDACTED].
25 So it looks like on this -- and can we -- there we go. Can you scroll in a little bit.

1 [REDACTED] All right. Mr. Blischak, it looks like on the 12th, at around
2 3:38 p.m. you sent a letter over to the FBI. Is that about right?

3 Mr. John Blischak. I believe so, because I called to find out who was in charge of
4 the -- agent in charge locally here in charge of investigation.

5 [REDACTED] Okay. And so you were just calling, trying to understand more
6 about the investigation with Mr. Epps? Is that fair to say?

7 Mr. John Blischak. Correct. And letting them know that we're here to
8 cooperate and we had nothing to hide.

9 [REDACTED] Okay. Can we scroll up to the couple pages above this? I
10 believe this is a letter -- right here.

11 So on January 12th, Mr. Blischak, you send a letter to a Special Agent Phillip Bates
12 at the Phoenix FBI. And just to summarize this letter, I believe you're saying that
13 Mr. Epps would like to cooperate with any ongoing investigation?

14 Mr. John Blischak. Correct.

15 [REDACTED] Okay. And can we keep scrolling up, [REDACTED].

16 So it looks like again after this initial communication with the FBI on January 12th,
17 Mr. Blischak, you talk -- or at least you annotate a call with the FBI from February 2nd,
18 2021. What were you calling back for, just to get a status check on the investigation?

19 Mr. John Blischak. I don't know what you're making reference to.

20 [REDACTED] Oh, can you go up, [REDACTED], to the February 2nd -- sorry, I didn't
21 know if it scrolled up -- February 2nd right here. So you sent another email -- another
22 letter to the FBI. It looks like you had a call the previous week with them.

23 Mr. John Blischak. It appears that there was some delay in our communication
24 due to [REDACTED].

25 [REDACTED] Perfect. So then on February 15th -- so can we scroll up to the

1 February 15th email, [REDACTED] -- it looks like a Special Agent Alexander Simms from the FBI
2 emails you, Mr. Blischak, to schedule an interview with Mr. Epps. Is that about right?
3 That document --

4 Mr. John Blischak. Right.

5 [REDACTED] Okay. And then the same day, you send a letter -- so keep
6 scrolling up, [REDACTED] -- you send a letter back to the FBI describing Mr. Epps' actions on
7 January 6th. So there's going to be a letter from the same day from Mr. Blischak. Keep
8 going up.

9 This will be the letter. So it's about two pages, and we'll just let Mr. Blischak and
10 Mr. Epps scan it real quickly, but it's dated February 15th.

11 Mr. John Blischak. Okay. Basically I've read it, [REDACTED]

12 [REDACTED] Okay. So at this point, you were just expressing that Mr. Epps
13 wanted to cooperate? Is that a fair summarization?

14 Mr. John Blischak. I was just reemphasizing a desire to cooperate and his
15 underlying desire to be peaceful while he was there.

16 [REDACTED] Okay. And so eventually you all scheduled an interview with
17 Mr. Epps on March 3rd -- for March 3rd?

18 Mr. John Blischak. The agents come to my office.

19 [REDACTED] The agents came to your office for the meeting on March 3rd?

20 Mr. John Blischak. They did. I don't believe that they taped it. They might've.
21 I don't know. They didn't tell me they were taping it, but -- again, I just don't know
22 whether they taped it, but if they did, we, again, nothing to hide.

23 [REDACTED] What topic did you all discuss during the interview?

24 Mr. John Blischak. Basically the same as you're emphasizing now. They wanted
25 to know what his involvement was there, why he was there, any other relevant matters.

1 [REDACTED] Did you all produce any documents to the FBI after this interview,
2 that you can recall?

3 Mr. John Blischak. There were no actual documents to produce.

4 [REDACTED] Okay. And this is the last question I think I have on this. At this
5 point, you were the only one communicating with the FBI on behalf of Mr. Epps. Is that
6 correct, Mr. Blischak?

7 Mr. John Blischak. I was the only one what?

8 [REDACTED] You were communicating with the FBI on behalf of Mr. Epps at
9 this point? You were talking to the FBI?

10 Mr. John Blischak. [Inaudible] with them.

11 [REDACTED] Perfect.

12 BY [REDACTED]

13 Q Mr. Epps, you were not talking to the FBI at this point, correct? You were
14 relying on your attorney to talk to the FBI?

15 A Yes, sir.

16 Q Thank you. Mr. Epps, did any of your family members get interviewed by
17 the FBI?

18 A My son.

19 Q Do you know when that interview occurred approximately?

20 A It was shortly -- well, April? I believe it was April.

21 Q Okay. Do you know if your son made any productions to the FBI of papers
22 or -- did your son produce any documents or anything to the FBI?

23 A Not that I'm aware.

24 Q Are you aware of what your son talked about with the FBI?

25 A I am not.

1 [REDACTED] Do any other Members or staff have questions about this line of
2 questioning?

3 You can take the exhibit down, [REDACTED]. Thank you.

4 Okay. It's about 3:40 p.m. Eastern time. Let's take a -- a 5-minute, maybe 5, 10
5 minutes. Are you okay, Mr. Epps, with a quick recess?

6 Mr. Epps. That's fine.

7 [REDACTED] Okay. Let's take a 5-minute recess and come back on at 3:45,
8 1:45 your time.

9 Mr. Epps. Sure.

10 [REDACTED] All right. Thank you.

11 Mr. Epps. Thank you.

12 [Recess.]

13 [REDACTED] Welcome back, Mr. Epps. So we will go back on at 3:47 p.m.

14 [REDACTED] I think, Mr. Epps, you might be muted still. I think you might be on
15 mute still on your end.

16 Perfect.

17 Mr. Epps. Okay. I've got a couple of clarifications to clear up or -- yeah, some
18 things that --

19 [REDACTED] Okay.

20 Mr. Epps. -- I didn't answer correctly, one of them being the 305 number. The
21 305 number, was some LinkedIn, some YouTube videos, all that stuff was sent to me. I
22 didn't -- I never answered it. I didn't know anything about -- I didn't know who this was,
23 so I didn't -- I didn't give it any mind. I don't know who that is.

24 [REDACTED] Okay.

25 Mr. Epps. And the other -- oh. Oh, Jim. So when Jim was interviewed by the

1 FBI -- I wasn't aware of this -- he provided pictures and a timeline, and all that stuff he
2 provided to the FBI. And he -- he -- when we got up to the Capitol, he was no more than
3 30, 40 feet away from me at all times and had pictures to document that. And that's
4 what he turned in to the FBI. I -- I wasn't aware of that until recently.

5 [REDACTED] Okay. So just for the record, we have included what we believe
6 are the submissions from your son to the FBI. They're exhibits 22 and exhibit 12, for the
7 record. So we do have that included in the official record, Mr. Epps.

8 Mr. Epps. Okay. Thank you.

9

BY [REDACTED]

10 Q Going back really quickly, just one more follow-up about Mr. Carver. Were
11 you aware that he had -- of any involvement he may have had with Three Percenters or
12 Oath Keepers or any other groups?

13 A No, sir. There's a political group called Rise.

14 Q Okay.

15 A Political group. They're an action group. I think he's a part of that, I'm
16 not sure. I attended one meeting at VFW to see what they were about, and they were
17 talking about things like the five -- what is it? Your phones, if you go to this five gigabyte
18 or whatever it is --

19 Q 5G?

20 A -- 5G, that it's going to give us cancer and all that stuff. There's lots of stuff
21 going on there, and I just kind of -- kind of stayed away from it, so. That's where I met
22 him.

23 [REDACTED] Okay.

24

25

BY [REDACTED]

1 Q Can you share a little bit more with us, Mr. Epps, about what you and
2 Mr. Carver talked about at dinner on the 5th?

3 A Just regular -- not much. I mean, surface talk --

4 Q Was he in Washington for the rally?

5 A -- surface talk, you know, how'd your day go, that kind of stuff. Got to
6 know each other. What time are you going to the rally, we're going to get there early,
7 that kind of stuff.

8 Q Okay.

9 A I mean, it was -- it was a party atmosphere. There -- there wasn't a lot of
10 restaurants open. So there was a lot of Trump supporters in these little restaurants
11 when you could find them open. It was a party atmosphere. I mean, people were
12 having a good time. It was --

13 Q Did he share with you what his intentions were for the rally? Did he have
14 anything particular in mind in terms of going to the Capitol, making his voice heard,
15 anything like that?

16 A I -- I don't recall anything out of the ordinary. I didn't know him that well.
17 I mean, I met him once before, and then that day I got calls from him. So that was the
18 second time I'd met him. I don't know much about him. He seemed like a really nice
19 guy. He probably talked to me about his reasons for being there. I don't remember.
20 I don't recall. It's not remarkable.

21 Q Did you connect with him at all on the 6th?

22 A No, sir, I didn't.

23 Q Have you talked to him since?

24 A I have not -- well, I did the other day when you asked that I -- I tell you who
25 all these people are with the phone records. So I called and I said, excuse me, I have this

1 number on my phone. I need to find out who you are. You're not in my contacts.
2 And, Hey, Ray, this is Jim Carpenter, or whatever his name is. And that's the only other
3 time I talked to him.

4 [REDACTED] And just to be clear, this was during the time where you were
5 going through and trying to figure out the numbers on your call log that may not have
6 been saved in your phone?

7 Mr. Epps. Exactly. Yes, sir.

8 [REDACTED] Thank you.

9 BY [REDACTED]

10 Q Mr. Epps, I know we've touched on this multiple times today, but as we get
11 here to the end, I want to ask on or around January 6th, were you acting on behalf of any
12 government agency when you were in Washington, D.C.?

13 A No, sir. The only time I've been involved with the government was when I
14 was a Marine in the United States Marine Corps.

15 Q Are you aware that people and reporters -- reports, I mean, have claimed
16 that you might have been an informant and were acting as an agitator on January 5th and
17 6th? Are you tracking those stories?

18 A Yes, sir. I have somebody that -- that has volunteered a lot of time, and we
19 are also paying to collect that data, it is so far from the truth. They're not only saying I
20 could be, they are saying that I was.

21 Q So why are you collecting this data, like, what are your thoughts when
22 reading it, these reports are saying that you were a government informant or source?

23 A I'm being used at this time to further their agenda, to either sell their news
24 or whatever, make themselves more successful at -- at pushing this garbage, or, on the
25 other hand, to further them in a political career.

1 Q I'm not inferring that you did anything wrong or committed any crime with
2 this question. But do you have any insight about why you have not been charged by the
3 DOJ?

4 A Because I'm sure the DOJ, the FBI, and you guys have gone through these,
5 and it's -- the little snips and pieces, the edited film that they've put together, this
6 fictional character that they have put together, doesn't fit. If you -- if you see the whole
7 story, you see that I'm trying to stop the violence, trying to keep people from getting
8 themselves in more trouble. Pretty sure that's why.

9 Mr. John Blischak. Marcus, with all due respect, I think you're asking him a legal
10 question which he can't answer.

11 [REDACTED] Understood, Mr. Blischak.

12 Mr. John Blischak. Trying to keep this open disclosure, but if we were in an
13 adversary hearing or more formal, I would object on the basis of the nature of the
14 question.

15 [REDACTED] Understood, Mr. Blischak, understood.

16 Mr. John Blischak. I'm charging him a lot of money, [REDACTED] I got to take care
17 of him.

18 [REDACTED] Mr. Blischak, this may be a better question for you then. Are
19 you aware, or do you have an understanding of why Mr. Epps was removed from the list,
20 the FBI list?

21 Mr. John Blischak. Upon information and belief, I believe he was removed
22 shortly after he contacted the FBI and/or the FBI contacted me.

23 BY [REDACTED]

24 Q Mr. Epps, are you also aware and tracking that certain, I would say, elected
25 leaders, are also accusing you of being an FBI informant or source or agitator? Are you

1 tracking that as well?

2 A Yes, sir.

3 Q How has --

4 A [Inaudible.]

5 Q How have these reports and now elected leaders also talking about your
6 alleged involvement, how has this changed, if it has at all, your life at all?

7 A Well, I'm going to -- I'm going to start with the most tragic. Give me a
8 minute because I get a little emotional.

9 I have 38 grandkids and one of them [inaudible.] Those grandkids are being
10 picked on at school because of what their granddad did, because there's not a lot of Epps
11 in the country. Now, these grandkids I've taught their whole lives, and their parents
12 have taught their whole lives, we obey the law, we -- we choose to do right, we stick up
13 for those that are less fortunate. We do those things.

14 I'm a fighter by nature, but I'm a Christian by choice. That's what we've taught
15 our grandkids. Now, that's just part of it.

16 The other part is, my wife is not living in our home right now. We have death
17 threats. Some of them are very credible, and it's not good. Our business is -- we went
18 from five to six weddings a week, now we're down to two to three a week, and we're not
19 getting the calls. We're not getting the -- the -- well, we have these Google accounts
20 and all these different things, and they've absolutely destroyed us. It's -- it's very
21 disheartening.

22 And the leaders that try to -- try to ride this thing for gain, for whatever purpose
23 they're doing it, I just -- I just believe that they could do better. It's very -- it's saddened
24 me because I -- I respected these people.

25 And not just them. The news, I respected them, watched them. You get better

1 news on the -- on the tabloids. At least the same. At least when you read that, you
2 know what it is. I'm -- I'm very disappointed, very disappointed.

3 And some leaders and the media, some of the media -- there's been a few that's
4 told the true story -- is that -- does that give you a good enough answer?

5 [REDACTED] Thank you. I know that's -- I know it was probably difficult to
6 talk about some of these recent issues that your family have now faced. And I'm going
7 to turn it over to Mr. Kinzinger, and then [REDACTED]

8 Mr. Kinzinger. Mr. Epps, thank you. Just so you understand our commonality,
9 I'm a Christian myself, and I think truth matters. And you know, for me, learning to tell
10 the truth at Sunday school was, you know, one of the first lessons I ever learned as a kid.

11 You talk about how this has affected your life. What is your -- what do
12 you -- sitting where you are now, what's kind of your biggest fear, and have you ever
13 considered, you know, potentially speaking out about it, or is there fear in that as well?

14 I just wanted to kind of get your mind-set on that a little bit too, because I -- again,
15 my perception, not speaking on your behalf, but my perception is, you know, you were
16 exercising your First Amendment right. You were trying to do the right thing, and
17 provided a snippet of a convenient narrative for a conspiracy. So I just wanted to hear
18 more from you on that.

19 Mr. Epps. We couldn't speak out for quite some time. It's an ongoing
20 investigation. And you know, like -- like certain Senators -- or certain politicians that
21 were questioning the FBI, knowing what the answer would be, but trying to drive their
22 narrative, the media's done the same thing with me. They know anybody in my position
23 can't talk about it.

24 We're asked by our attorney, someone we pay to give us good advice, and their
25 advice is, Don't talk about it. And they take that to the next level. He must be guilty,

1 he's not talking about it. The media, coaxing us to come out, camping out at our house,
2 the buses of people that come.

3 We had a tour bus come by our home and our business with all these whacked out
4 people in it. There are good people out there that was in Washington. Those aren't
5 the people that's coming by our house. This attracts -- when they do this sort of thing,
6 this attracts all the crazies out there.

7 We've got one guy that has been in prison and shot by the police once, and he's
8 out on bail right now, and he's trying to contact me. Those are the kind of people I'm
9 talking about. There's some real crazies out there, we're finding out. So, yeah, I can't
10 have my wife live in my home, and I've got to protect my property.

11 Mr. Kinzinger. Well, thank you, and just for your information, in about 10
12 minutes I have to leave, but appreciate your words and coming in.

13 Mr. Epps. Thank you.

14 Mr. John Blischak. Mr. Kinzinger, before you leave, why don't you take care of
15 that baby, okay?

16 Mr. Kinzinger. Yeah. My wife's got him right now.

17 Mr. John Blischak. Okay.

18 Mr. Kinzinger. Thank you.

19

20 Q I want to -- I want to just follow up, but not to belabor this point because I
21 know it is sort of a difficult one for you, sir. My understanding is that the former
22 President was in Arizona recently, and even he's sort of raising this -- this conspiracy
23 theory. Has that had an impact on you?

24 A That has -- yeah, it did have an impact. It was very troubling. I think that
25 he's being misled right now. I think he's surrounded his people by -- he's surrounded

1 himself by a few people that they don't have the truth, and they're trying to push a
2 narrative. I think he's misled right now. I don't know. I don't know what to think
3 about that.

4 Q And has that -- have you seen an uptick in the level of hostility towards you
5 and your family?

6 A Yes. But not -- not due to that. That was before when -- let me get these
7 names right. It really, really started when Congressman Massie started his deal, and
8 he -- there was a reporter -- or not a reporter -- there was a blog or something, it's called
9 Revolver, I'm not real familiar with it, but they come out with this fictional character that I
10 led a team, Breach Team Six, and all this stuff. I mean, it's real crazy stuff, and he
11 brought that kind of stuff to the floor of the House. When that happened, it just blew
12 up. It got really, really bad. Him and, gosh, Gaetz and Greene, and, yeah, they're just
13 blowing this thing up. So it got really, really difficult after that. The crazies started
14 coming out of the woodwork.

15 [REDACTED] Thank you.

16 Mr. Kinzinger. May I ask real quick, what about, what was the timing? Around
17 what month did this start to accelerate? I mean, I hadn't heard about you personally,
18 myself, until probably about November. From your position, when did -- when did this
19 kind of -- I'll call it a conspiracy, because that's what it is -- start to creep up?

20 Mr. Epps. Revolver, I guess, come out with this conspiracy. They started
21 putting this thing together, and I don't think Revolver was anybody -- this is my own
22 personal belief. I'm not sure if this is right -- until politicians basically put them out
23 there. I mean, then everybody believed it. They believed their politicians, and it just
24 blew up.

25 Mr. Kinzinger. And just as a quick aside, there's a conspiracy that I created ISIS.

1 So, I didn't, but I've seen it on the internet, and I understand how this stuff spreads, and
2 the truth doesn't spread as quickly. So, thanks. That's it.

3 [REDACTED] Mr. Kinzinger, I can tell you, I believe Mr. Massie's comments were in
4 October with -- Director Wray was testifying, and then I think Revolver article was at the
5 end of October -- the first Revolver article.

6 Mr. Epps. So maybe it was the other way around.

7 Mr. Kinzinger. Yeah. I hadn't heard of Revolver until you either, but that's how
8 they make their money, and it's convenient for some people. So thank you.

9 BY [REDACTED]

10 Q And just to further confirm the record, the committee reached out to you,
11 Mr. Epps, the end of October, and then we coordinated with Mr. Blischak, and we
12 interviewed you for the first time on November 3rd?

13 A Yes, sir.

14 Q Is there anything else that we didn't ask you, Mr. Epps, that you wanted to
15 share with the committee today?

16 A You know, my wife wanted something read.

17 Mr. Andrew Blischak. Yes, and I'll just sum it up for everyone in closing
18 because --

19 Mr. John Blischak. This is Andrew Blischak for the record.

20 Mr. Andrew Blischak. Thank you. She just discusses a little bit about the death
21 threats and how her lives have changed. I'm sure you've heard, she -- her living
22 situation, but perhaps the most poignant point is that she remarked, I've already lost one
23 son. And with the hype that preceded the rally, I was afraid for our son's safety. Ray is
24 a protector by nature, especially with his family. I wanted Ray to be there to keep our
25 son safe.

1 She also wanted Ray to go because she thought it would be a great father-son
2 bonding opportunity, especially in D.C. with the sightseeing, because Ray was
3 initially -- he initially declined. He wanted to keep working, so. The way she suggested
4 that he go and -- it's her fault.

5 Mr. Epps. No, it's not. You know what, she wanted to thank you guys. This
6 has been not a good experience, this whole thing, but dealing with you, it has been a
7 good experience, so.

8 [REDACTED] Thank you, Mr. Epps.

9 Mr. Kinzinger. May I ask one more quick thing, sir?

10 Mr. Epps. Yes.

11 Mr. Kinzinger. And maybe this is better directed to the lawyer. In terms of
12 information we've learned, discussions we've had, is it a hope that there is the truth that
13 gets out there? Are you worried about that? Maybe, however, we can answer that or
14 whoever can answer that.

15 Mr. John Blischak. I was discussing with my client just prior to we started, that I
16 fear that what could happen to my practice if certain allegations are made regarding me
17 representing Mr. Epps. I'm a criminal attorney, and have been so for 35 years.
18 Occasionally the public doesn't like it when you represent various characters, and I'm not
19 saying in any way -- I'm proud to represent Mr. --

20 Mr. Epps. Epps.

21 Mr. John Blischak. -- Epps. Thank you. Boy, this is a lot of pressure. Now,
22 having said that, sometimes you don't always represent the best in people, so. I'm -- I
23 got my guard up. Already had one threatening call, and that's -- that's all I can tell you.

24 Mr. Kinzinger. Okay. Well, again, be safe. Thank you.

25 Mr. John Blischak. Thank you.

1 [REDACTED] Well, Mr. Epps, Mr. Blischak, Mr. Andrew Blischak, I'd like to
2 thank you all for voluntarily coming in to sit with us again for this transcribed interview.
3 It's interviews like this with the committee that allow us to gather the facts and
4 understand your perspective directly from the source, and allows us to better understand
5 your mindset and the actual events leading up to January 6th and on January 6th, and in
6 your case, after January 6th.

7 So thank you for taking the time with us in November, thank you for producing
8 documents, and for sitting with us here today. And with that, I believe we can go off the
9 record, but thank you.

10 Mr. John Blischak. [REDACTED]

11 [REDACTED] Oh, sorry.

12 Mr. John Blischak. I just wanted to comment. I'm just a little bit envious of that
13 nice couch you got in your office. I don't have that in my office. I mean, damn, I got to
14 go to Washington, D.C.

15 Mr. Epps. I've got -- got a quick question.

16 [REDACTED] Mr. Epps, yes.

17 Mr. Epps. I -- okay, we're off the record, right?

18 [REDACTED] Let's go off -- we're off the record, correct, yes. We've gone off
19 the record.

20 [Whereupon, at 4:08 p.m., the interview was concluded.]

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Certificate of Deponent/Interviewee

I have read the foregoing ____ pages, which contain the correct transcript of the answers made by me to the questions therein recorded.

Witness Name

Date